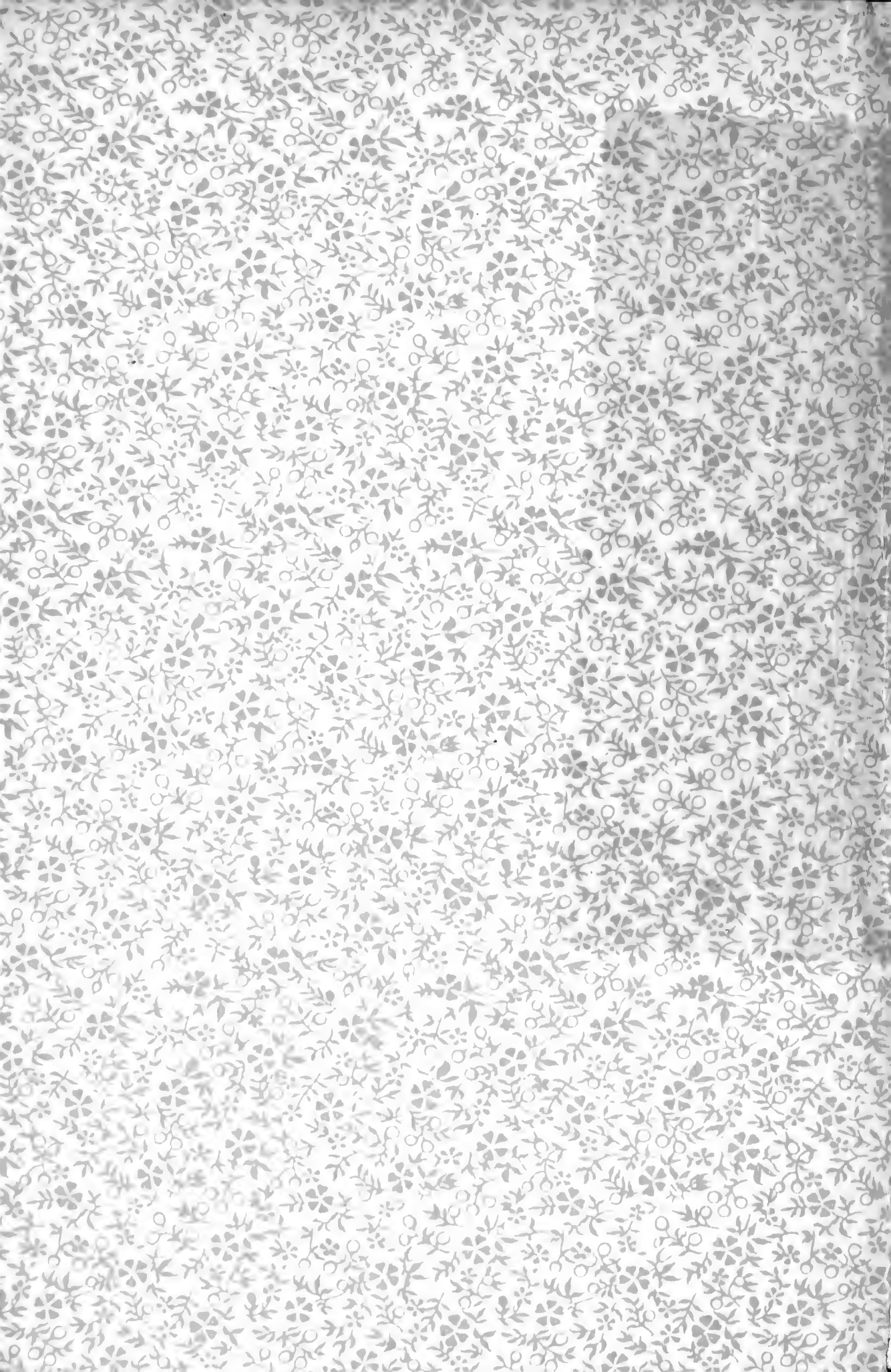


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SAINT CATHARINE OF SIENNA

*Cordially*  
*Mother Francesca*





Pages from  
A Hundred Years of  
Dominican History

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By  
ANNA C. MINOGUE

Author of Cardome; Borrowed From The Night;  
The Waters of Contradiction; Loretto;  
Annals of The Century.



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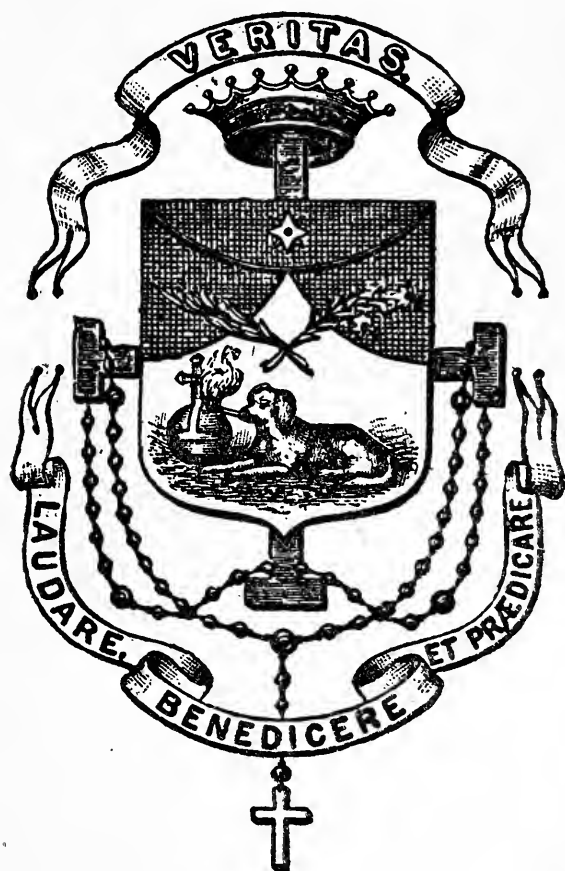
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# Pages from A Hundred Years of Dominican History

*The Story of the Congregation  
of Saint Catharine of Sienna*



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To  
The Memory of  
THE REVEREND SAMUEL THOMAS WILSON, O. P.  
and of  
MOTHER ANGELA SANSBURY AND COMPANIONS  
Who Founded the  
CONVENTUAL THIRD ORDER OF SAINT DOMINIC  
In the United States,

This Volume Is Reverently Dedicated by  
The Author.

776 2



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## FOREWORD.

In presenting this history of the first establishment in the United States of the Conventual Third Order of Saint Dominic, we ask the indulgence of our readers for its shortcomings. What Bishop Spalding said of the Dominican Fathers in Kentucky, "They did much and wrote little," is applicable also to the founders and first members of Saint Catharine of Sienna Congregation of Dominican Sisters. In the following years, this failure of theirs to preserve the history of their work was, in a measure, made good, and reliable accounts of the early days of the community were gathered from various sources, while a record of its current history was kept. But these were destroyed by the fire in 1904. The Book of Professions, which happened to be in the novitiate and which was carried out by one of the novices on that dreadful January night that saw Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent and Academy reduced to ashes, was all that was saved of the accumulated historical records. The sisters have since striven, as far as lay in human power, to repair their loss. The result of their efforts to rescue the history of eighty years from oblivion, as well as their fidelity in preserving the history of the succeeding twenty years, will be seen on the pages of this book.

The author wishes to express her gratitude to the superior general of Saint Catharine of Sienna Congregation, the Reverend Mother Francesca Kearney, and to Sister Margaret Hamilton for their many



courtesies and great assistance in preparing this book. Sister Margaret had gathered the fugitive leaves of the history of the Congregation into an orderly arrangement, which relieved the author of a hard part of the work. In her research, extending over several years, Sister Margaret received great assistance from the oldest members of the Congregation, from the archivists of the various academies and missions, from old friends and pupils of Saint Catharine Academy. She is also deeply indebted for assistance in her work to the Reverend Dominican Fathers of Saint Joseph Province, especially its archivist, the Rev. Victor O'Daniel, and to the Sisters of Nazareth, who placed at her disposal the files of Catholic periodicals, preserved at their mother-house near Bardstown, Kentucky.

But while deploring the loss of the records of her life, we do not require them to assure us that Saint Catharine Congregation has ever been true to the Dominican ideal, with all that that implies. Her present history so informs us. In her century of existence she has faithfully performed her God-appointed work; in the school to which she is dedicated; in the military hospital and plague-infested places, when there was need for her services. By her, innumerable souls have been led to God. For that purpose she came into existence. That she has been faithful to it during these hundred years, is her greatest tribute, her highest praise.

Anna C. Minogue.

Dinmore Park, Latonia, Kentucky.

## PREFACE

This is an age of students and writers of history. Perhaps, indeed, no other era has ever had so many scholars devoted to this study. Nor is the reason far to seek. History is one of the most useful and practical of the sciences. Through its pages the life of the world and its peoples passes before us in kaleidoscopic picture, affording us an endless field of information that is not only highly profitable, but likewise fraught with a human interest to which few other sciences can lay claim. The diligent historian comes into contact with all races, and lives the life, so to express it, of past generations within the brief span of his own.

History may be called psychology translated into action, for it reveals the souls of men as related in their deeds. It is this, in fact, that makes it one of the most impelling of the sciences. The interest is all the greater in proportion to the numbers and principles involved. Thus the history of an entire nation, other things being equal, affords the reader more pleasure than that of a part of it. Similarly, perhaps nothing appeals so strongly to the human heart as does the story of a struggle in the cause of justice and right, or of charity, religion and humanity.

No branch of history contains greater interest, or affords more instruction, than does that which is known as annals or chronicles. Such chronologi-

cal registers of events and facts give the unbroken thread of the life of a nation or community—a straight, orderly record of its ups and downs, its struggles for existence or for good, its failures and accomplishments. They delight the student or reader at the same time that they store his mind with useful knowledge, suggest wholesome thoughts, and inspire the courage to imitate the noble example of those who thus pass in review before the mental vision. Perhaps no other study is better calculated to teach the righteous-minded the wisdom, even from a mere human point of view, of singleness of purpose and honest action.

**Pages from a Hundred Years of Dominican History** belongs to the category of annals. The author of the book makes little attempt at rhetorical display but this is in keeping with the quiet, self-sacrificing lives led by the members of the institution whose story she traces—Saint Catharine of Sienna, near Springfield, Kentucky. Indeed the simple, easy style in which the volume is written lends an added charm to the narrative of the life-work of a body of religious women that cannot fail to be of no small interest to American readers. The Church of Kentucky is the mother of three of our most noted communities of sisters, Loretto, Nazareth and Saint Catharine of Sienna. All three were American-born. There, too, was matured the design of establishing the Xaverian Brothers, although it was conceived and given birth in Belgium. The history of early Catholicity in the state of Kentucky is as a chap-

ter on heroism. Nor are its least charming pages those which treat of the foundation and labors of the Dominican Sisters of Saint Catharine of Sienna.

Whilst Saint Catharine's was likely the first in design, owing to the poverty and busy lives of its founders, it did not come into existence until a decade of years after Loretto and Nazareth had entered upon their noble work. To this circumstance is largely due the slowness in the early growth of the institution. The field of labor to which the sisters were devoted was already occupied, and vocations had been started in other directions. However, though few in numbers, its members consecrated themselves with a spirit of heroic self-sacrifice to the service of God and to the betterment, both spiritual and temporal, of their neighbor.

The extraordinary single-mindedness with which these good women followed the spirit of their Order, and carried on the work of their calling, reminds one of the lives led by the nuns of Prouille, the first community founded by the chivalrous Saint Dominic. Their one purpose was to sanctify their own souls, to bring others nearer to the Blessed Master, and to spread His kingdom on earth. To effect this end, no privation was too great, no toil too hard or too menial. While the sisters' specific work was the education of girls in their academies and the conducting of parochial schools, the poverty of pioneer days necessitated the heaviest and severest labors. These they endured with a patience and fortitude that could have been born only of a love of Christ. Doubtless

the later rapid increase of the community in numbers was largely heaven's reward for its spirit and the holy lives led by its early members.

By priority of foundation Saint Catharine is the proto-community of the various establishments of Dominican Sisters scattered throughout the length and breadth of the country. Of many, by division and subdivision, she is the mother. Taken collectively these institutions form an aggregate which few other orders of women equal either in numbers or in good accomplished. With the numerical increase of the American daughters of Saint Dominic has come a corresponding variety in their work, which to-day embraces every sphere of Christian education, active charity and spiritual endeavor.

Thus the tender plant of Saint Dominic which Father Samuel T. Wilson took under his paternal care, and watched over with eager solicitude from Saint Rose's, near Springfield, Kentucky, has grown into a giant tree whose spreading branches cast their benevolent shadows into nearly every portion of the United States. Few of our dioceses there are, whether great or small, that have not a colony of Dominican Sisters. Some have many. Everywhere these religious women regard Father Wilson and Bishop Edward D. Fenwick, in a broad sense, as their spiritual fathers. Everywhere they give themselves heart and soul to their vocation, which is the salvation of their fellow-man. Few there are who will deny that in the United States our nuns, through their parochial schools, are real apostles of the faith. No order



of our sisters is more extensively or more effectually engaged in this noble mission than are the spiritual daughters of Saint Dominic, whose lives are principally devoted to the work of Christian education as their way of bringing souls to God and of advancing the cause of religion. Among these, Saint Catharine's occupies a conspicuous place. It is one of the glories of Kentucky's Church.

To tell the story of Saint Catharine's foundation, growth and labors during the first century of its existence, which it has just rounded out, is the message of **Pages from a Hundred Years of Dominican History**. The work is an edifying tale of generous sacrifice and high-minded endeavor in the cause of the Lord. When success is measured by eternal values (and these, after all, are the only true values), the greatest success in life is that achieved by the servants of God. The world at all times needs the stimulating example of such persons, to-day perhaps, more than ever before. Their lives are as books from which all may learn lessons of the most practical wisdom. This makes the present volume both timely and useful.

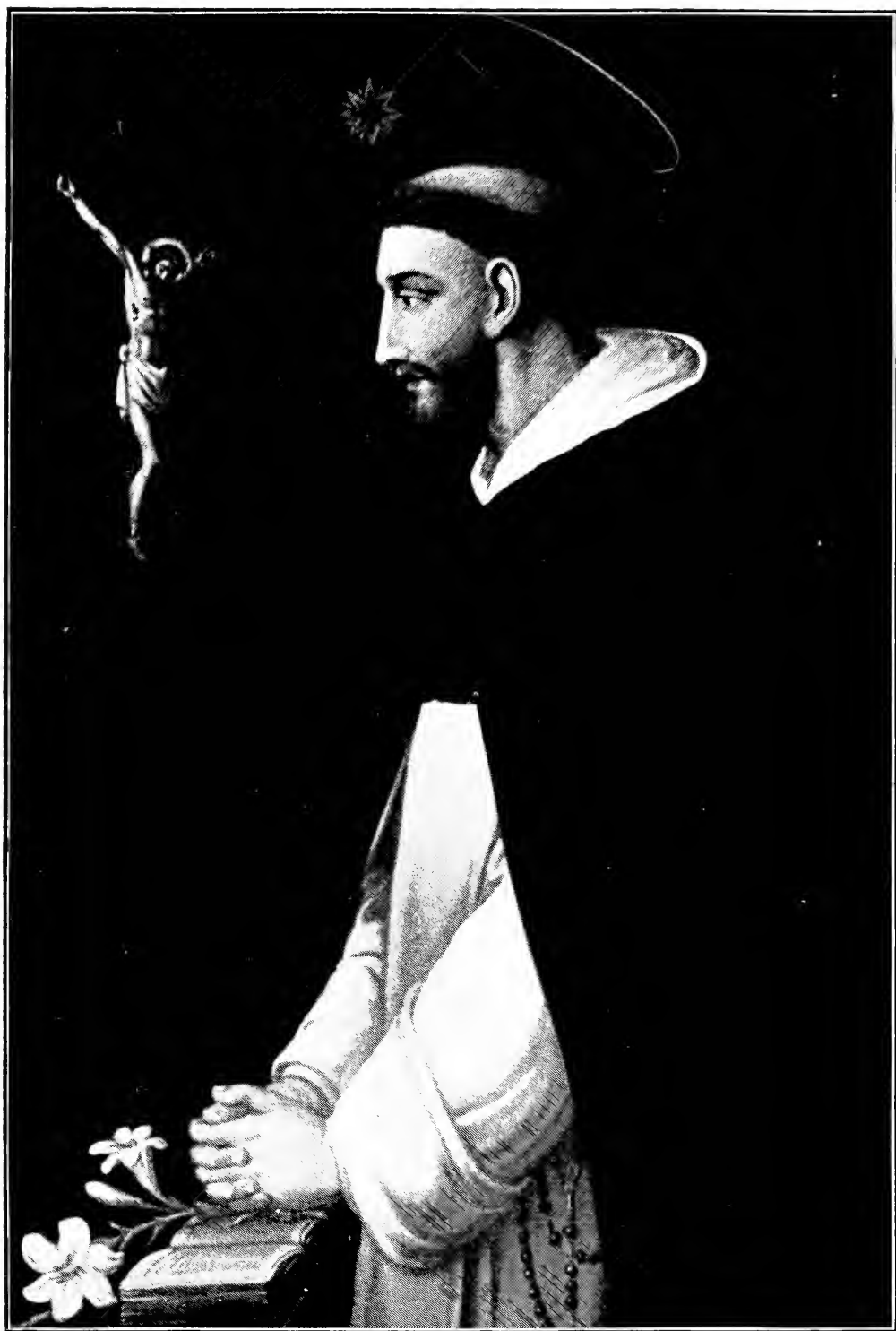
Doubtless, saints there were in the community, but they practiced none of those extraordinary and superhuman things which repel rather than attract the multitudes, through sheer despair of ever reaching the heights of holiness attained by some of God's elect. The sisters were human beings contending with human conditions. Their human nature offered trials against which, like the rest of us, they were obliged to combat. Brave Christian women that they

were, they confronted difficulties with a perseverance and a submission to the will of God that brought sanctity to their souls and success to their chosen field of labor. One could not wish a more salutary example than that set by these Sisters of Saint Dominic.

All this renders **Pages from a Hundred Years of Dominican History** the more consoling. The story is told with a simplicity of style and candor of mind that draw the reader and hold his attention. It quickens a love for the religious life, the while it inspires courage. It will convince many a young lady that she can lead such a life—mayhap be the occasion of realizing not a few vocations. Fortunately, the conventual archives and other first-hand documents are permitted to tell their own tale. This is the safest way of avoiding the personal bias often so inimical to historical accuracy.

The Catholic history of the United States has been all too much neglected. Happily many of the notable gaps are gradually being filled. It is to be hoped that the volume before us will be an incentive for other works along the same lines, as our communities celebrate their centenaries. Only when the *lacunae* are bridged over, can we expect a complete history of our American Church and of the institutions which have contributed so largely to its making. Such a record, well written, would make us all the prouder of our religion. Catholics have exercised a strong influence in the molding of American ideals, no less than played a glorious part in the history of the republic.

V. F. O'DANIEL, O. P.



OUR HOLY FATHER SAINT DOMINIC



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

---

#### The Order of Saint Dominic

.....And there was born  
The loving minion of the Christian faith,  
The hallow'd wrestler, gentle to his own,  
And to his enemies terrible.....  
.....; and so they called him Dominic.  
And I speak of him as a laborer  
Whom Christ in his own garden chose to be  
His helpmate. Messenger he seemed and friend  
Fast knit to Christ."—DANTE, *Paradiso*, *Canto XII*.

The Dominican Order, as its name implies, is the handiwork of Saint Dominic, "the hallow'd wrestler" as Dante called him. Few saints have been endowed with a character and personality so strongly marked, or with a spirit so admirably adapted to the great and noble work which Almighty God called upon him to perform, as was our Holy Father Saint Dominic. Yes, great and holy must have been the founder of the Order, which, after more than seven hundred years of mingled prosperity and adversity, still lives and provides for the shifting needs of the times. When Saint Dominic drew up the Constitution of the Order, he gave to it an elasticity which rendered it adaptable to all times and to all peoples, so that the Order in the restless twentieth century is as useful as it was in the glorious thirteenth.

In the year 1206, Saint Dominic was sent by King Alphonso IX of Spain on a mission which took him through southern France, the stronghold of the Albigensian heresy. Saddened at the sight of the havoc wrought by this insidious sect on the faith and morals of the people, Saint Dominic burned with zeal to reclaim them for Christ. From this time he cherished the desire of spending himself for the conversion of the heretics, and of instituting an Order which would have for its motto, "*Omnia ad salutem animarum.*"

Saint Dominic returned by way of Rome and was commissioned by Pope Innocent III to assist in combating the Albigensian heresy in Languedoc. It was in the early summer of 1206 that Saint Dominic first climbed the steep road between the meadows and vineyards that lead to the quaint old village of Fanjeaux. Here he began his labors in France. If the medieval world was saved from the mighty Albigensian heresy, it was in large part due to the great courage and burning zeal of this holy man of Caleruega, who with wisdom and foresight, threw up the impregnable dikes of Catholic teaching and morality against the dark waters of heresy that rushed onward and downward. Others before him had tried to stem the tide, but their efforts had been unsuccessful because they had failed to measure the strength of the forces opposing them.

When Saint Dominic entered the plains of Languedoc, to combat this heresy, he studied the strength of his foes, their methods of warfare and

plan of campaign, before taking up his sword in defence of the Church. The Albigensian heresy had made very deep inroads on the faith of the women, among whom it numbered many of its most earnest propagators. The sect maintained several schools for girls and young women, and in this early training Saint Dominic perceived the secret of the peculiar success of the heretical faction. To counteract this tremendous influence, he determined to found a convent to mold and protect the faith of the women converts that God granted him to make. Every day he saw more clearly that a convent must be founded, but where he knew not. On the evening of July 2, 1206, in a lonely spot just outside Fanjeaux, the Saint was praying for direction and guidance in the founding of this new convent, when suddenly a globe of fire darted downward and rested on a spot about a mile and a half distant on the plain. This remarkable occurrence happened several days in succession. Saint Dominic looked upon this as a direct answer to his prayer, and concluded that God wished this first convent to be founded on the spot designated. Consequently Prouille was chosen as the site of the first convent of the Second Order of Saint Dominic in the year 1206.\*

Prouille lies in a vast and richly cultivated plain, through which flow many clear streams fringed with long rows of willows. On the south it is shut in by a range of hills, still covered with the remains of vast forests which once rose to their summit. Dotted

---

\*Life of Saint Dominic—Drane.

here and there are villages and farm houses, with many a church tower rising towards heaven against the clear blue sky. This plain stretches for many miles toward the east and toward the west, but on the north it is bounded by what is called the Black Mountains, the slopes of which in the time of Saint Dominic were covered with a thick forest. Here in this plain, a little village constructed principally of mud houses, then clustered around the church of Saint Martin, which for a long time had been the resort of pilgrims. The first abode of the nuns consisted of a few of these mud cottages, which they occupied until the reception to the habit. It was on the feast of Saint Cecilia in the year 1206, that Saint Dominic gathered together his first religious (nine in number) whom, by the authority of the Bishop of Toulouse, he clothed in the habit he had chosen for them, a white woolen tunic and a black mantle and veil. At this time, they were established in their new home of which the land and buildings had been given by generous and loyal friends, notably the saintly Bishop of Toulouse, the Bishop of Osma, and the Chatelaine of Fanjeaux.

Saint Dominic gave them the Rule of Saint Augustine, and added a Constitution drawn up by his own pen. Besides the hours devoted to prayer and the recitation of the Divine Office, it also provided that a certain time each day be given to manual work, that is to spinning, sewing, painting and decorating, in order the better to avoid idleness, the cause of so many evils. The sisters gave themselves wholeheartedly to a life of contemplation and intercession



for the Church and the world; they prayed especially for the work of Saint Dominic and the brethren. It was by means of such prayer, but especially of the Rosary that the heresy was suppressed. Enlightened from on high, the Saint understood that this form of prayer would be the most powerful weapon for overcoming the enemies of the Church and defeating their impiety. The event proved that he was right; for, in fact, the use of the Rosary having been spread and practiced according to the instruction of Saint Dominic, piety, faith and concord once more flourished, the enterprises of the heretics failed, their power gradually decreased and a vast number of souls returned to the true faith. Another prayer recommended by the holy founder, and dear to the heart of every child of Saint Dominic is the "Salve Regina." This, too, was used in the first foundation at Prouille, a description of which I quote from "In Saint Dominic's Country."

"Behind the grille which completely fills in the eastern arch of the sanctuary, the unseen nuns are singing 'Nunc Dimittis.' A sweet voice in the invisible choir gives the blessing, and there is an instant of supreme silence. Then on the wings of a wonderfully thrilling voice, rises the petition, 'Salve Regina.' Whoever has heard it once longs to hear it again, that marvelous 'Salve' rising and falling in tender greeting, 'O dulcis Virgo Maria' sung as Saint Dominic's eldest daughters sang it at Prouille. And then, 'O Lumen,' which means so much more there than elsewhere that one's eyes fill with tears. 'Praedicator gratiae, Nos junge beatis' plead the soft voices of the choir, and one thinks for a moment of the life of penance behind that grille, and what the prayer of each of those nuns must mean to the Church."\*

---

\*In Saint Dominic's Country—C. M. Anthony.

Saint Dominic continued to traverse the country and gradually his magnetic personality, so fiery, so impassioned, but withal so gentle and so sweet, drew about him a small number of men who threw themselves zealously into the work of the saint. In this little band he saw the nucleus of the Order he had dreamed of founding to combat heresy and extend the empire of truth. Pope Honorius III approved the Order on December 22, 1216. It soon became apparent that Saint Dominic's ideals necessitated something greater than he himself had foreseen. For by the circumstances of their first work, his followers were forced to do what Cardinal Newman has so graphically phrased in his "Mission of Saint Phillip," "to form the whole matter of human knowledge into one harmonious system, to secure the alliance between philosophy and religion, and to train men to the use of the gifts of nature in the sunlight of divine grace and revealed truth."

In order to do this, it was necessary for them to attend the universities, to keep themselves informed of all the learning of the day, to organize their whole educational training, to spare no pains in forming themselves into a body of well equipped teachers. Then and then only could they set out to accomplish their mission. From the pulpit, whether in some great cathedral, or in the lecture room of a university, or in the open street, they would teach the truth. The world was going wrong, not from the heart, but from the head. It was not viciousness so much as ignorance that accounted

for the evils of society. The ideals of men had become perverted because they had lost the guiding star of truth. To set right, therefore, the wrong done by false philosophy, Saint Dominic founded the Order of Friar Preachers.

The convent of Prouille grew and flourished. In 1218, Saint Dominic sent Sister Blanche and seven companions from Prouille to Saint Sixtus in Rome, to assist in training the sisters of this second foundation. Sister Blanche and two of these sisters remained at Rome; the others returned to Prouille. Saint Dominic and the brethren lived at Saint Sixtus until the convent at Santa Sabina was ready to receive them. It was here that some of Saint Dominic's most wonderful miracles were wrought. The great Dominican scholar, Vincent of Beauvais, relates that one day the brethren who had been sent into the city to beg, returned empty-handed. Giacoma del Miele, who filled the office of procurator, came to the holy Father to represent the case, saying that there was absolutely nothing to set before the brethren, then forty in number, save a few crusts of dry bread. Saint Dominic, full of joy and holy confidence, commanded him to assemble the religious in the refectory and to distribute to them the bread he had. The brethren sat down to table, and were preparing to content themselves with the crusts, when two beautiful youths entered the refectory, carrying in the folds of their garments, fresh loaves. These they distributed in silence, beginning at the lower rows, one at the right and the other at the left, and placed before each

brother one whole loaf of bread. Then, when they had come to Saint Dominic, and had in like manner placed an entire loaf before him, they bowed their heads and disappeared, without anyone knowing whence they came or whither they went. This practice of serving the younger members first is still daily commemorated in every Dominican refectory.

Here, too, on another occasion Saint Dominic returning from his nightly vigil in the church, saw, according to the legend, his beloved Queen of the Rosary passing through the corridor, sprinkling the brethren as she went, and heard in reply to his inquiry as to who she was, the encouraging words: "I am she whom you invoke every evening. When you say 'Eia ergo Advocate nostra,' I prostrate before my Son for the preservation of the Order."

The Order spread rapidly into all the countries of Europe. The foundation at Madrid was the third convent of the Second Order established by Saint Dominic. The singular interest with which he watched over this foundation is evidenced by the letter which, after his departure, he addressed to the nuns on hearing of their taking possession of their new convent. This letter possesses a special value as being almost the only authentic fragment of his writings which has been preserved to posterity.

\*Brother Dominic, Master of the Friar Preachers, to the Prioress and Sisters of the convent of Madrid, health and increase in all virtue;

We rejoice greatly at the report we have received of your conversion and give thanks to God that he has delivered

---

\*This letter was preserved by the Cardinals of Aragon and is now in the archives of the Order of Saint Dominic in Rome, Italy.

you from the mire of the world. Continue, then, my daughters, to combat your enemy with prayer and watching, knowing that none shall be crowned save those who have fought valiantly. Hitherto you have had no house suitable for following the religious rule, but now you have no such excuse for negligence, seeing that you are provided with a convent in which you can carry out every detail of the religious life. I desire therefore, that henceforth silence be better observed in places of silence, such as the choir, the refectory and the dormitory, and that you live in all respects according to the Constitution that has been given to you. Let no one go outside the enclosure, and let no one be admitted within it, unless it be some Bishop or Prelate who shall come to preach or visit you. Do not neglect vigils and discipline, and let all be obedient to the prioress. Let none waste time in idle conversation about unnecessary things.

And inasmuch as we cannot help you in your temporal necessities, we desire not to burden you, nor will we permit that any Brother should have authority to receive novices, but only the prioress with the council of the convent. We command our dearest Brother, who has labored so much for you and has gathered you together in this holy state, that he will dispose all things as seems best to him, to the end that your life may be ordered in a holy and religious manner. Therefore, we give him full faculties and authority to visit and correct you, if need be, to remove the prioress from her office, with the consent, however, of the majority of the community. He also has power to grant any dispensation that he may consider necessary.

Farewell in Christ,

“Dominic Gusman.”

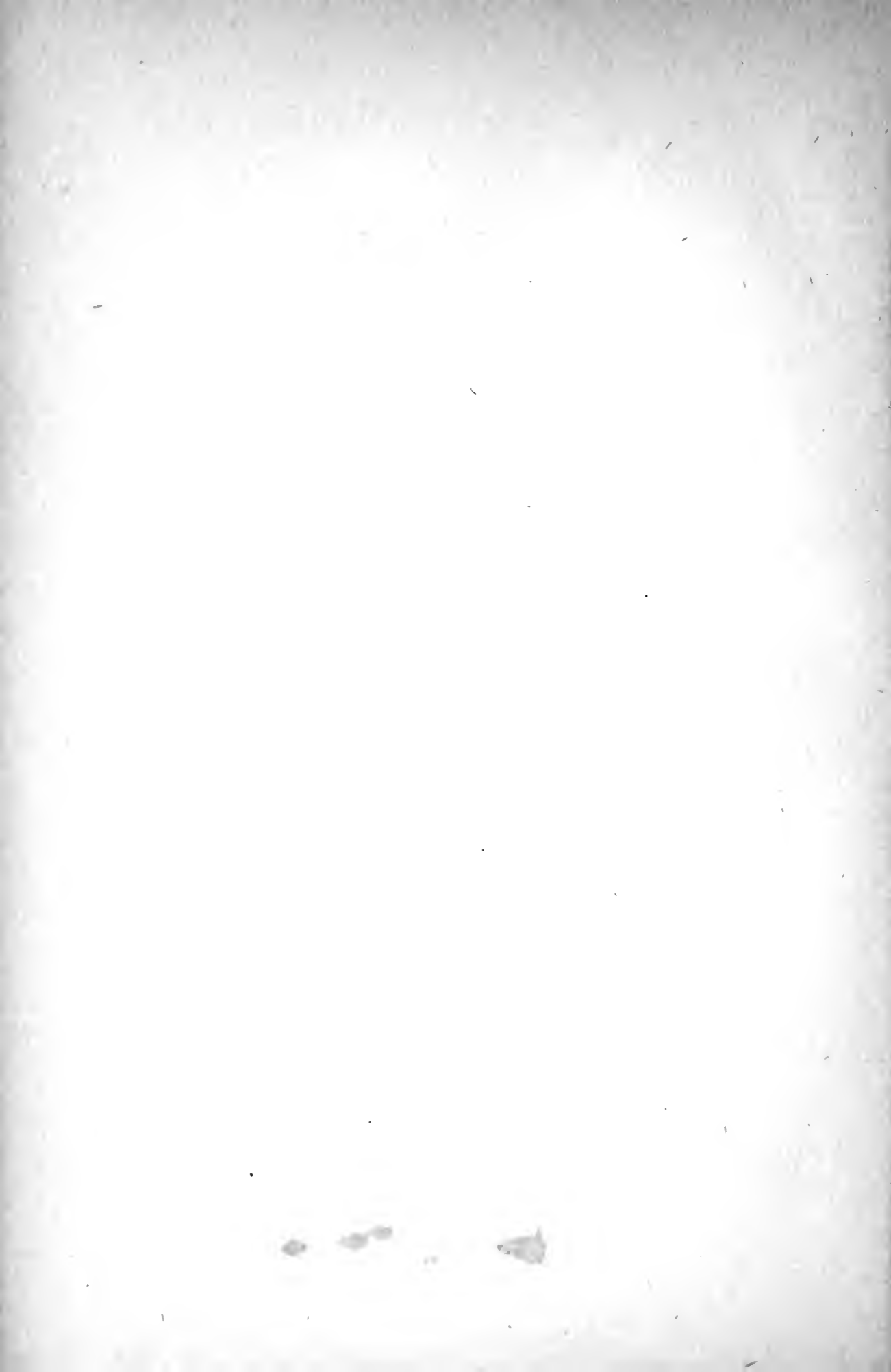
Not content with the First and Second Orders, Saint Dominic wished the lay-people to share in his apostolic mission. Accordingly he established the “Militia of Jesus Christ,” which in the course of time came to be known as the Third Order of Saint Dominic. The purpose of the Third Order has ever been the spread of truth and virtue. To obtain this end, Saint Dominic taught that instruction, self-sacrifice, and prayer are the only weapons of attack that char-

ity gives for the service of truth. The Third Order is composed of pious persons of both sexes living in the world, and has been a powerful means of promoting holiness among lay-people, and has given to the Church Saint Catharine of Sienna and Saint Rose of Lima. The exact date of the rise of this association has never been exactly determined. Many think it was some years earlier than the Order of Preachers, others a little later, but still while Saint Dominic was in Languedoc. It is very likely that it was founded in Lombardy; for the Blessed Raymond of Capua, in his life of Saint Catharine of Sienna, says, "The Blessed Dominic, after he had regulated the association, went to the Lord." His death occurred at noon on August 6, 1221.

Saint Dominic framed rules for this society in the practice of piety and religious mortification, suited for a religious body and for the common duties of domestic and civil life. In other words he carried the cloister into the midst of the world. A few years after the death of Saint Dominic, Pope Gregory IX addressed a bull, November 22, 1227, to his dear sons, the "Brethren of the Militia of Jesus Christ," whereby he approved their institute, and took their person and property under the immediate protection of the Holy See. A little later, May 18, 1235, the same Pontiff wrote to the second Master General of the Friar Preachers, Blessed Jordan of Saxony, and recommended to his zeal the propagation of this holy Militia. As particular wants arose in the church, the Third Order of Penance of Saint Dominic took

up various lines of work, all directed to some religious, charitable or educational end.

In 1256, Blessed Emily Bicchieri gathered a number of saintly women around her and founded a convent of the Third Order where they lived in community, took the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and observed the Rule of Saint Augustine and the Constitution of the Sisters of Penance, instituted by Saint Dominic. This Third Order has multiplied and spread to the four quarters of the earth. The growth in this country has been marvelous. Its history is a century's record of patient, courageous struggles and glorious achievements in the cause of religion and the betterment of society. At first the work was limited to teaching, and that greatest of charities still remains their vocation, but as the number of communities multiplied, their sphere of activity has extended to hospitals and sanitariums, homes for aged people, asylums for orphans and other neglected children, convents in which women of the world may follow out the exercises of spiritual retreats, convents in which the sisters keep up an unbroken recitation of the Rosary, and last, but not least, a convent where the sisters prepare for the work of the foreign missions. Surely the dream of Rev. Edward Dominic Fenwick and Rev. Samuel Thomas Wilson has been realized; they longed to see an institution with many branches that would spread into all parts of our land and carry with them the banner of Christ.





## CHAPTER II

### The Coming of the Friars.

As in the history of the Old World, since the thirteenth century, the name of Saint Dominic is gloriously woven, so also in the New, it is brilliantly recorded. When Spanish ships set forth in the wake of Columbus, they carried Saint Dominic's missionary sons, and while the commanders, seeking gold and glory, braved the perils of sea and of land, the friars faced equal danger in the quest of souls. The Indians, gazing in wonder at the newly arrived strangers, singled out among them the white-robed men, whom later they were to know as their best, perhaps, their only friends. The time of Spanish conquest passed, but the time of Dominican conquest never; South, Central America and Mexico owe much of their Christian civilization to those Dominican friars and their successors. The monuments of architecture, the works of art that adorn the cities of the southern Republics, found their inspiration in Dominican influence; while education was established and promoted by the Order whose founder demanded that learning should accompany sanctity in those who would be his followers.

While in that part of North America, now a portion of our great American Republic, their spiritual empire was not so firmly established or extended, still the white wastes knew them, and they broke the

Bread of Life for the Catholic exile and the newly converted Indian. Their first permanent settlement within the confines of the United States was made in Kentucky in 1806.

The persecution which Christ declared should be the portion of His disciples had been sternly meted out to the English Dominicans of Bornheim, Belgium, where the Order had been established, in 1658, by the great Dominican Cardinal Howard. Here, through the succeeding years, the work of teaching and preaching had been successfully carried on until the French Revolution, whose victorious army destroyed the college.

Barely escaping with their lives, the community fled to England. One, however, was left behind in the hope that he might save the buildings from destruction. This was the Rev. Edward Dominic Fenwick, whose American birth, it was felt, would cause him to be respected by the French revolutionists. But he was seized and thrown into prison. Nor was it without the greatest difficulty, and after many hair-breadth escapes, that he finally regained his liberty and made his way to England. There he taught and studied for several years in a college which his brethren had now opened at Carshalton.

Father Fenwick was born in Saint Mary's County, Maryland, August 19, 1768. When but sixteen years of age, he was sent to Bornheim College to complete his classical studies. Answering the divine call, he decided to enter the Order of his instructors, thus following the example of his uncle,

the Rev. John Ceslaus Fenwick, who had joined the Dominicans in 1777. The younger Fenwick was raised to the priesthood early in 1793. His ordination was hastened by ill health and the political disturbances of Continental Europe. The same causes often interfered with his studies. Yet his natural talent and industry enabled the young American to acquire a broad, liberal education and a fund of useful information that stood him in good stead in his future ministry.

A long cherished hope of Father Fenwick had been to see the Order established in his native land. In England, he set about securing the realization of this hope. After many disappointments and long periods of waiting, his prayer was granted. Accompanied by the Rev. Antoninus Angier, Father Fenwick set sail from London in the early days of September, 1804, and arrived at Norfolk, Virginia, in November of the same year. He immediately wrote to Bishop Carroll, informing him of his arrival, and placing himself and companion at his disposal. The Bishop extended a most gracious welcome to the Dominicans.

Father Fenwick had hoped to establish his Order in Maryland, but when he learned of the needs of the Catholics in Kentucky and of the promise Bishop Carroll had made to send the Dominicans there, he put away his fondly cherished dream, to execute the wish of his superior, and as apostle of Ohio and first bishop of Cincinnati won for himself an everlasting remembrance.

While Catholics were among the first settlers of Kentucky, Catholic emigration did not begin until 1785. These forefathers of the faith in Kentucky were chiefly from Maryland, descendants of the colonists sent over by Lord Baltimore. The faith that centuries of persecution in their cruel motherland could not destroy, nor spiritual deprivation in the new country weaken, burned with intense fervor in the souls of those Catholic emigrants. Each house was a shrine, each family a congregation, and when finally priests came and churches were built, devout and faithful people were ready to receive their ministrations. No apostle of later days excelled in zeal and fidelity those early priests of Kentucky nor endured greater hardships in obedience to their divine call; but we must not withhold praise from the laity who gave them such splendid co-operation. The home, the family, is the foundation stone of both Church and state; by those first Catholics of Kentucky it was laid with reverence, guarded with fidelity, and handed down to posterity as a priceless possession. It is a most significant fact that within less than forty years after the first settlement of Catholics was planted in Kentucky, there had sprung up in their midst three new religious congregations of women, founded by, and composed of daughters of the soil; while to the sacred ministry had been given numerous sons, some of whom were destined to become luminaries in the American Church.

The first Catholic settlement was made on Pottinger Creek and here, in 1792, was erected Holy

Cross Church. Other settlements were Hardin Creek, Bardstown, and Cartwright Creek, the last of which was begun in 1787. Cartwright Creek, named from Samuel Cartwright, one of the early prospectors of the state, waters the fertile lands of Washington County. To-day the scene of its course through the historic settlement is that which a fertile and prosperous farming country presents; comfortable homes, broad meadows, ample corn and tobacco fields, beautiful pastures of bluegrass, on which feed pure-bred sheep and cattle, and horses that have made Kentucky famous; model roads with their procession of automobiles and auto trucks, the occasional horse and buggy already looking antiquated.

What a marvelous change from the day in 1788, when Henry Cambron, late of Montgomery County, Maryland, gazed upon his newly purchased farm on Cartwright Creek, adjoining that of John Waller, which boasted a grist mill, the only one of its kind in the country! Here, a year later, Cambron was joined by Thomas Hill. Their new homes were scarcely founded when they began to lay plans for the building of a church. To render this feasible, they knew they would have to attract other settlers; and with this end in view, they purchased more land, which they offered for sale to their co-religionists. The Cartwright settlement was soon effected, but Father Whelan, who had been ministering to the Kentucky Catholics, withdrew, and it was not until the coming of Father Badin that their pious wish was

realized. In 1799 the church of Saint Ann in the Cartwright Creek settlement was blessed by Father Badin, assisted by Father Fournier.

In acceding to the wishes of Bishop Carroll to found his Order and begin his ministerial work in Kentucky, Father Fenwick realized that he was not going among strangers. Many of those hardy pioneers were of his own blood, others were family connections and friends. He was hospitably entertained by his kindred and made welcome by all, when, at the suggestion of Bishop Carroll, he visited Kentucky in the spring of 1805. Father Fenwick was charmed with the beauty of the country and edified by the spirit of the people. Country and people were worth his best efforts, and impatient to be at his Master's work, he hastened back to Maryland and began preparations for his new life on the outpost of civilization.

The two other members of the English Dominican province who had been assigned to the American mission, the Rev. Samuel Thomas Wilson and the Rev. William Raymond Tuite, arrived from England September 10, 1805. As Father Fenwick was obliged to remain in Maryland for a time to settle his business affairs, he was unable to accompany Father Wilson and Father Tuite to Kentucky, which, owing to an accident on the way, they did not reach until the last days of 1805, or the first of 1806. Father Tuite, from the time of his coming to Kentucky, was in charge of Saint Joseph Church, Bardstown, and of Saint Michael Church, Fairfield. Father Wilson



BISHOP FENWICK





was pastor of Saint Ann Church on Cartwright Creek. Father Angier, the fourth member of the band of founders, had been placed in charge of a mission in Maryland, and was not released until the following year, 1807. Shortly after his arrival, in Kentucky, Father Angier was placed in charge of Saint Francis congregation, Scott County, with the outlying missions in Fayette, Woodford, Madison, Bourbon and adjoining counties.

Father Fenwick joined his brethren in midsummer of the year 1806. Immediately he purchased a farm of five hundred acres from a Protestant minister named John Waller, paying for it, four thousand five hundred dollars. The brick dwelling that stood on the land was converted into a convent and placed under the patronage of Saint Rose of Lima. The fathers took possession of their new home before the close of 1806. By the special sanction of Pope Pius VII, Saint Rose Convent became a province, which the Master General, the Most Rev. Joseph Gaddi, placed under the protection of Saint Joseph. Bishop Carroll gave the foundation of the Dominicans, encouragement, and in writing of them to Father Concanen, O. P., later the first bishop of New York, he said: "I view them as choice auxiliaries, conveyed hither by the special appointment of Providence, to instruct the old and young, to extend our holy faith." How well the prophecy of the venerable bishop has been fulfilled, the history of the Dominicans in the United States attests.

Father Fenwick was appointed superior of the new foundation and began his work with character-

istic zeal and foresightedness. The need of priests was only too apparent and with the view of supplying this want, he decided to establish a school for the training of students. Robert and Nicholas Young, nephews of Father Fenwick, who had been attending the Jesuit College at Georgetown, D. C., accompanied the fathers to Kentucky to continue their studies and assist in the foundation of the college. Classes for them and other boys of the neighborhood were opened by Father Wilson. For the accommodation of the students an addition had to be built, and Father Fenwick and Father Wilson began collecting funds for the purpose. The new building was begun in the fall of 1806 and was blessed and occupied on March 19, 1807. When the college was opened the following May, twenty-two boys were received as students, a number of whom signified their intention of studying for the priesthood. On August 30, 1808, six young men were solemnly clothed with the habit of Saint Dominic, and in May, two years later, their first solemn vows were made by these earliest recruits of the Order in the United States.

With the convent and school established, Father Fenwick turned his thoughts to the erection of a new church. On May 24, 1807, he laid the cornerstone of the church of Saint Rose, of which he wrote: "I think it is the largest in the state and will only be surpassed by the cathedral of Baltimore."

With college and convent provided for and the church under way, Father Fenwick felt that he could relinquish the reins of government to give himself

more completely to his ministerial work. In answer to his repeated petitions, the Most Rev. Joseph Gaddi appointed Father Wilson the first provincial of Saint Joseph province, February 27, 1807, but the notification did not reach Saint Rose until October 10. However, the position of authority and responsibility from which Father Fenwick had begged to be relieved, was awaiting him elsewhere, and on January 13, 1822, at Saint Rose Church, he was consecrated bishop of the newly erected see of Cincinnati, which he ruled wisely and well until his widely deplored death from cholera in 1832.\*

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\*Rev. S. T. Wilson, O. P., was the first canonically appointed provincial of Saint Joseph Province, Rev. E. D. Fenwick was at his own request appointed to serve as superior pro tem.—Annals of Dominican Order in United States.



### CHAPTER III

#### The Foundation

When Saint Dominic entered upon his great work for the salvation of souls, one of his first acts was the establishment of an order for women. This, made at Prouille, France, and known as the Second Order of Saint Dominic, soon spread over Europe. Its members were enclosed and followed the rigorous rule defined for them by their saintly founder. In the course of time, the pious among the laity, drawn to the higher life by the preaching and example of Saint Dominic and his followers, formed themselves into an association. Yielding to their petition, Saint Dominic took them under his protection, and thus the Third Order of St. Dominic had its birth. Its value to Church and state is beyond reckoning, and if Saint Dominic had left earth no other legacy, still would he be numbered among humanity's great benefactors because of his Third Order. In later years, conventual branches of this Order composed of women, came into existence and devoted their talents to the work of Christian education.

Now the spirit of their blessed founder had led a band of disciples to the Kentucky frontier, and they, too, realized the necessity of establishing an Order of women to aid them in the work of Christian education and the salvation of souls. The number of Catholic families was increasing, and schools for

their children must be provided. But teachers for those schools must first be obtained, teachers whose work, like their own, should be done in love and sacrifice. But could they, in the wilderness, repeat what Saint Dominic had accomplished in the heart of civilized Europe? If they could find souls willing to make the great surrender, were the people ready for the undertaking? Had they yet the vision of the future of the state and the nation, with the opportunity they carried for those prepared for such an apostolate?

What hopes and fears swayed the minds of Father Wilson, now superior of Saint Rose, and his counsellors as they projected the establishment of a new community of women in the wilds of Kentucky, have not been recorded for us; but by these tried and prudent priests we may be sure the matter was long debated and fervently prayed over. We know, in fact, that Father Fenwick, before returning to America, discussed the question of bringing Dominican Sisters from England; and that, after the fathers had settled in the new West, he cherished the hope of soon seeing the daughters of the pioneers don the venerable habit of Saint Dominic.

Finally, the will of God was made manifest to the fathers and they decided to found a convent of the Third Order, to be devoted to the work of Christian education.

It was now fifteen years since the Dominicans had come to Kentucky. In that time their ministry

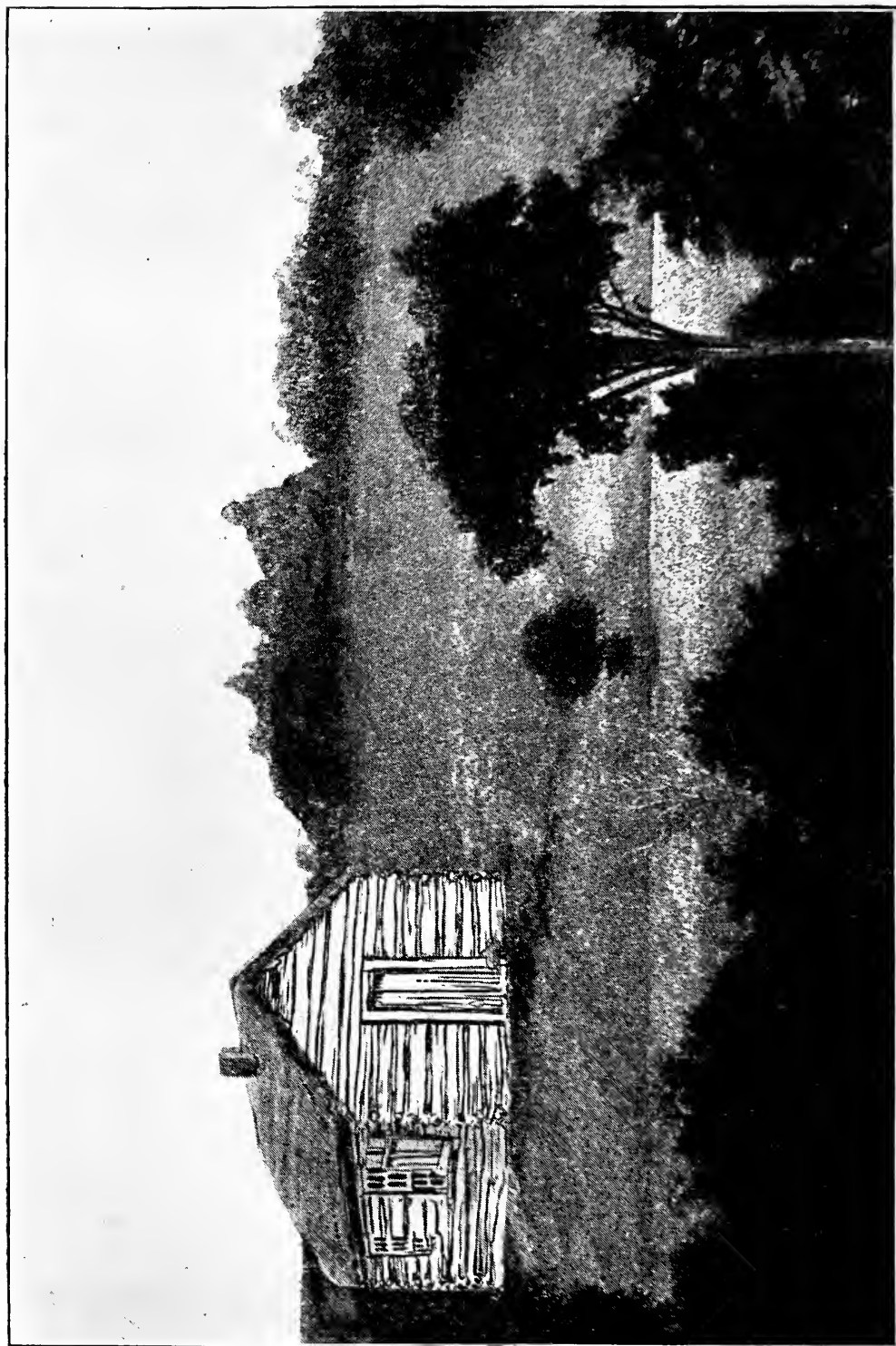
had been extended in the state, while Ohio was largely under their care. It was a fruitful ministry, too. Devout congregations filled their churches; their college for boys was well attended, while into their novitiate had come sons of some of the leading families of the South. By those not of the household of the faith, the Dominicans were well received, and many came to embrace the truth, through their zeal for the charge committed to them. Such was the condition of the religious field entrusted to the Dominicans, and when they made known their wish to establish a community of the conventual Third Order of women, it is no matter of surprise that there should be ardent young souls to respond. Father Wilson laid the project before Bishop Flaget of Bardstown who gladly gave his consent, while the Pro-Vicar General of the Order, the Very Rev. Pius Maurice Viviani, not only warmly approved of the foundation, but accorded to its members all the privileges belonging to the Second Order. Thus from the beginning, the future Saint Catharine of Sienna Community was affiliated to the Order.

The Sunday, on which the announcement was made before the congregation assembled in Saint Rose Church, of the inauguration of this great undertaking, was a memorable one, not alone for Kentucky, but for the entire country, since in the century that has followed the establishment of the first Dominican sisterhood, North and South, East and West have been blessed by the presence of its angelic daughters. Nine young women presented themselves

before Father Wilson, on February 28, 1822, as the first candidates and founders of the new community, which was to be known as Saint Mary Magdalen. They were; Marie Sansbury, Mary Carrico, Mary A. Hill, Mary Sansbury, Rose Sansbury, Rosanna Boone, Judith McMahan, Severly Tarleton and Molly Johnson.

To any one familiar with the history, especially the Catholic history of Kentucky, the family names of that first band of Dominican nuns stamp it as truly Catholic, and, with one exception purely American. That exception had an unusually interesting life. Mrs. Judith McMahan had come to Kentucky from Ireland, with her husband, early in the twenties. Having no children and desirous of living a more perfect life, they determined on a separation and she entered the new foundation of Saint Mary Magdalen. There she received the habit, but later returned to Ireland, hoping to enter one of the Dominican houses established in her native land. Not possessing the required dowry, she was unable to carry out her pious intention, and was then entrusted by the Archbishop of Dublin, with the care of the Penitents' Asylum, Townsend Street, Dublin. To facilitate the granting of a dispensation to her husband, John McMahan, in order that he might be promoted to Holy Orders, she made a vow of perpetual chastity. Father McMahan was ordained by Bishop Rosati on November 20, 1831, and labored with earnestness and success in and around Galena, Illinois, where, on June 19, 1833, he died of cholera contracted while





FIRST CONVENT CALLED BETHANY



ministering to his flock. Mrs. McMahon preceded him to the grave.

Another to separate from the little band was Molly Johnson, who remained only a short time in the community.

Only the barest record remains of the proceedings of that momentous occasion which launched upon the stormy waters of time the frail bark of the American Third Order. Of those Kentucky maidens who, in the morning of life, did not hesitate to entrust themselves to so perilous a venture, humanly considered, no account has come down to us. They were young, for rarely do any but the youthful take hazards; they were quite possibly beautiful; whatever wealth the frontier knew, they were sharers of; it is not unlikely they had the best education the day afforded. Thus life opened before them, with its fair promise of love and happiness, and always the dream of greater fortune at some bend of the road. It was a blazed trail. They could be reasonably certain of security as they made life's journey. The opposite of this was the life to which they had been summoned. Perhaps they had some personal knowledge of the religious life, for the Sisters of Loretto and the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth had been in existence since 1812. If so, they realized the Via Crucis that lay before them. They would have to do the work not only of women, but of men. For other women, life's necessities are provided; they must provide for themselves, and in this performance of dual tasks, they would have no human

comfort, they would know themselves to be always alone.

Thus may the future have been drawn for them; thus may the notes of warning have been sounded. Doubtless they pondered the matter seriously, took counsel with their own hearts in prayer; and in the end knew they were not mistaken, knew they were called by God, and they joyfully entered upon their novitiate.

On a farm belonging to Saint Rose Convent was a one-room log cabin, with a loft above, and this was given to the sisters for their first convent. Those log houses of pioneer days possessed nothing of beauty and little of comfort. Roughly constructed of trees from the surrounding forest, with a chimney made of mud and wattles, that drew up the smoke or drove it back with the turn of the wind; small holes for windows, earthen floors and furnishings as crude—such was the original home of the first families of Kentucky, such the home of the first Dominican Sisters in the United States. But in it they immediately entered upon their regular conventual life, and the same exercises and rules observed by their unknown sisters in the stately convents of Europe, were followed in the rude cabin on the frontier. Here at midnight, they arose for Matins and Lauds, and dawn found them beginning their day of prayer and toil.

The distribution of time arranged for them by Father Wilson, was as follows: Matins and Lauds, at midnight, except the last three days of

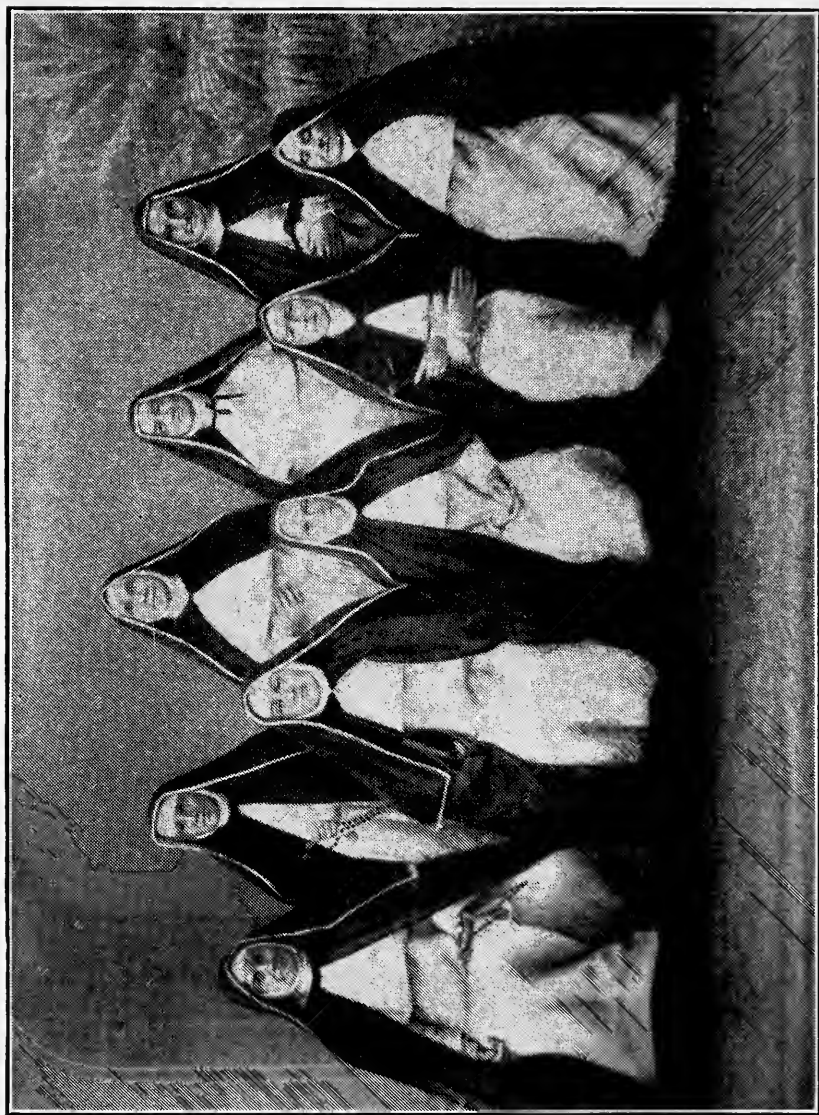
Lent; meditation and morning prayers at five o'clock; Prime, immediately before Mass; Tierce, immediately after Mass; Sext, at ten o'clock; None, from the fourteenth of September until Easter, immediately before dinner; Vespers and Compline, at four o'clock. In Lent (except on Sundays) Vespers after None; night prayers at half-past seven o'clock; breakfast after Tierce; dinner at twelve o'clock and supper at six. Office of the Dead was recited on Sunday immediately before dinner, on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday at two o'clock. Profound silence was observed from night prayers until after meditation, ordinary silence the remainder of the day, except after dinner until two o'clock and from supper until half-past seven.

As the sisters' work was to be educational, it was necessary they should be trained for it, and Father Wilson gave the sisters daily instruction in English, history and mathematics, being ably assisted by the Rev. Richard P. Miles. Soul and mind were thus being cared for, but no provision was made for the other part of the human triad; the material things, the sisters must provide for themselves. They had no dowry, for their parents were struggling and could do nothing for the child who had elected to separate herself from their common life. Thrown upon their own resources, the founders of the Dominican sisterhood proved themselves not unworthy of their human and spiritual lineage. With faith resting securely on God, they took up the work nearest at hand, and labored in the fields, planting their crops,

cultivating them through the long summer days, and garnering them in the fall. When that first winter came, it saw corn for hominy and bread laid by, potatoes and other winter vegetables in the pits, and dried fruit hanging in bags.

On Easter Sunday, April 7, 1822, the first reception of Dominican nuns in the United States was held at Saint Rose Church, in the presence of a large and interested congregation. Father Wilson officiated and gave the habit to Marie Sansbury to be known in religion as Sister Angela. The ceremony was a simple one. After the Mass, the postulant, hearkening to the invitation, "Veni, Sponsa Christi," approached the altar rail where she received the habit, scapular and veil of the Order and pronounced the solemn promise to renounce the world and its maxims and to bear with fortitude the trials and privations she had voluntarily taken upon herself. Later, on the same day, according to the Constitution accepted by the sisters of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, Father Wilson gave the habit to Mary Carrico, Sister Margaret; Judith McMahon, Sister Magdalen; and Severly Tarleton, Sister Columba, in Saint Magdalen Chapel.

Father Wilson was assisted by the Rev. R. P. Miles, O. P., who on the same day was appointed the sisters' first chaplain. He gave the sisters the Rule and Constitution which Father Wilson had translated from the latin, and the approval of which the Rev. R. L. Concanen had secured from Pope Pius VII and from the Pro-Vicar General of the Order.



GROUP OF EARLY MEMBERS





The manuscript Rule and Constitution were taken from those of the sisters of the Second Order and adapted to the conditions and the times. The sisters were to make only simple vows, but it was stated in the formula used in their profession: Whereas, for want of proper enclosure I cannot make solemn vows, but simple ones, my wish and intentions are, as soon as proper enclosure can be procured, to join in petitioning His Holiness to allow us to make solemn vows as the nuns of the Second Order usually make.\*

As soon as the sisters had received the habit, they appealed to Father Wilson to appoint a superior. He wisely advised them to consult among themselves and to decide upon the one they thought best fitted for the position. The choice fell upon Sister Angela Sansbury. Father Wilson appealed to the Pro-Vicar General, the Very Rev. Pius M. Viviani, for a dispensation to permit her to make her profession before her year of probation had expired. It was granted and Sister Angela was admitted to profession on January 6, 1823, but her election was not confirmed until June 6, 1823, as the following warrant of authority shows:

JESUS—MARY—DOMINIC

To our beloved daughter in Christ, the virtuous Sister Angela Sansbury, professed religious of our college of Saint Mary Magdalen, Third Order of Saint Dominic, Brother Thomas Wilson, Prior Provincial of the Province of Saint Joseph, Order of Saint Dominic.

Whereas, by power of a rescript of His Holiness, Pius VII., a college of nuns of the Third Order of Saint Dominic has been

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\*Archives of Saint Catharine of Sienna.

erected in this neighborhood, and our weak endeavors blessed with some success; it becomes a duty incumbent on me to provide for said religious college a legitimate constitutional head and superior. For which reason, being well acquainted with your exemplary conduct and zeal for regular discipline, and moreover influenced by that affection which your virtuous sisters testified toward you on a former occasion when they petitioned to have you placed at the head of the community; therefore, said Brother Thomas Wilson, Prior Provincial, and, as above stated, by the authority of my office, and moreover especially empowered by His Holiness to that effect, do hereby declare, establish and confirm you, the said virtuous Sister Angela Sansbury, first prioress of our said college of Saint Mary Magdalen in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen. I hereby give you all spiritual and temporal authority over said college and religious nuns, as all prioresses of our holy Order possess and our holy Constitution authorizes, and, though I never doubt of your perfect obedience and ready compliance with the Will of God thus officially intimated to you, yet, for increase of merit and in conformity with the statute of our holy Order, I hereby enjoin you to accept and diligently to perform the said office of prioress of Saint Mary Magdalen Community without demur. In virtue of holy obedience and under formal precept, commanding each and all of our said virtuous sisters under the same formal precept to acknowledge and respect you as their lawful superior and constitutional prioress before God. Hereby dispensing by my authority with all constitutional impediments to the contrary and prohibiting anyone to reclaim against our present arrangement.

Given at Saint Rose in the presence of both communities under our hand and seal this sixth day of June, 1823.

Father S. T. Wilson, O. P.

Provincial.

The enclosed patents were sealed and accepted June 6, 1823 at 8:30 o'clock A. M.\*

To our beloved daughter in Christ, Sister Angela Sansbury,

Mother Angela Sansbury, the first prioress of Saint Mary Magdalen Convent, was born in Prince George County, Maryland, in March, 1795. Her par-

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\*Archives of Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent.

ents were Alexis Sansbury and Elizabeth Hamilton. A woman of exceptional ability and of singular holiness of life, she was well fitted for the serious undertaking that lay before her.

The generous sacrifice made by her sister Marie, had ready influence upon Elizabeth Sansbury, and on April 17, 1822, she asked to be admitted into the community. With her came Teresa Edelen. On August 3, 1822, another reception was held in Saint Magdalen Chapel when the following postulants were clothed with the habit; Mary A. Hill, Sister Ann; Mary Sansbury, Sister Catharine; Rose Sansbury, Sister Francis; Rosanna Boone, Sister Rose; Teresa Edelen, Sister Euphrasia (later Sister Magdalen); Elizabeth Sansbury, Sister Mary Benven. Father Miles, the chaplain, officiated. On August 30, 1823, Sisters Magdalen Edelen, Benven Sansbury, Ann Hill, Margaret Carrico and Francis Sansbury made their profession.



## CHAPTER IV

### Pioneer Days

Alexis Sansbury had seen two of his daughters forsake the paternal roof to enter the newly founded community, and must have beheld with natural pride the selection of one of them for the office of superior. Wishing to aid her in the development of her work, he presented to her and to her sister a farm on which was a large log house. Cartwright Creek ran through the domain, and the house stood on its bank, in the heart of a rich and beautiful valley.

On taking possession of their new home, the sisters began to repair and improve it. With their own hands they mended the leaks in the roof, and divided the lower floor into three compartments—one serving as a chapel, another as a kitchen and refectory combined, the third as a workroom. The dormitory was on the second floor, up near the roof, and was reached by a ladder from the room below. The house, while more commodious than their first cabin, was equally rude and unattractive. But it was home and their own, and the sisters, with true womanly instinct, began its transformation. The interior walls were treated to a generous coat of whitewash; rag carpets made by their industrious fingers, covered the floor; and gradually, as their means permitted, pieces of better furniture were added to replace the crudely fashioned articles which

had so long done service. Pictures, brought by the novices, or gifts from their good friends at Saint Rose, looked down on them from the white walls, and books began to accumulate on the shelves provided for them.

Change came outside also. The grounds were enclosed by a new rail fence, a garden was laid out, and flowers and shrubs, transplanted from field and wood, gave their beauty and fragrance from April till October.

But these changes were made only gradually. They were the result of the between whiles of prayer and toil in the lives of the sisters. The labor in the fields went on unremittingly, for the community was growing and the school was increasing. The wealth of the sisters had been increased by the gift of a horse and a cow. While the former animal was not in his prime, he was a boon to the community. By his aid, the fields were more properly prepared and cultivation of the crop was accelerated. Directed by one of the sisters, he plowed the furrow, into which another sister dropped the corn, while a third following with a hoe, covered the seed. It was a slow and laborious operation to plant and cultivate a crop of corn sufficiently large, for, if the addition of the horse and cow was welcome, they required a goodly portion of the grain.

Another crop required by the sisters, in common with their neighbors, was flax, and where today pedigreed herds graze, flax once spread its waving green and lifted its blue flame of flower. When the

seed had ripened, the stalks were pulled, made into small bundles and immersed in water. After that, came the hard work of breaking the flax. This, elsewhere, was usually done by men, it being considered too hard for even the sturdy women of pioneer days. But not for many years had the poor community any outside help, so they broke their own flax, wove it on to the big spools, and through the winter days, spun it into linen of various grades. When spring came, the bleaching process began. At length, their year's work was completed, and the bolts of linen were ready for use. The sale of linen became one of the sources of income for the sisters.

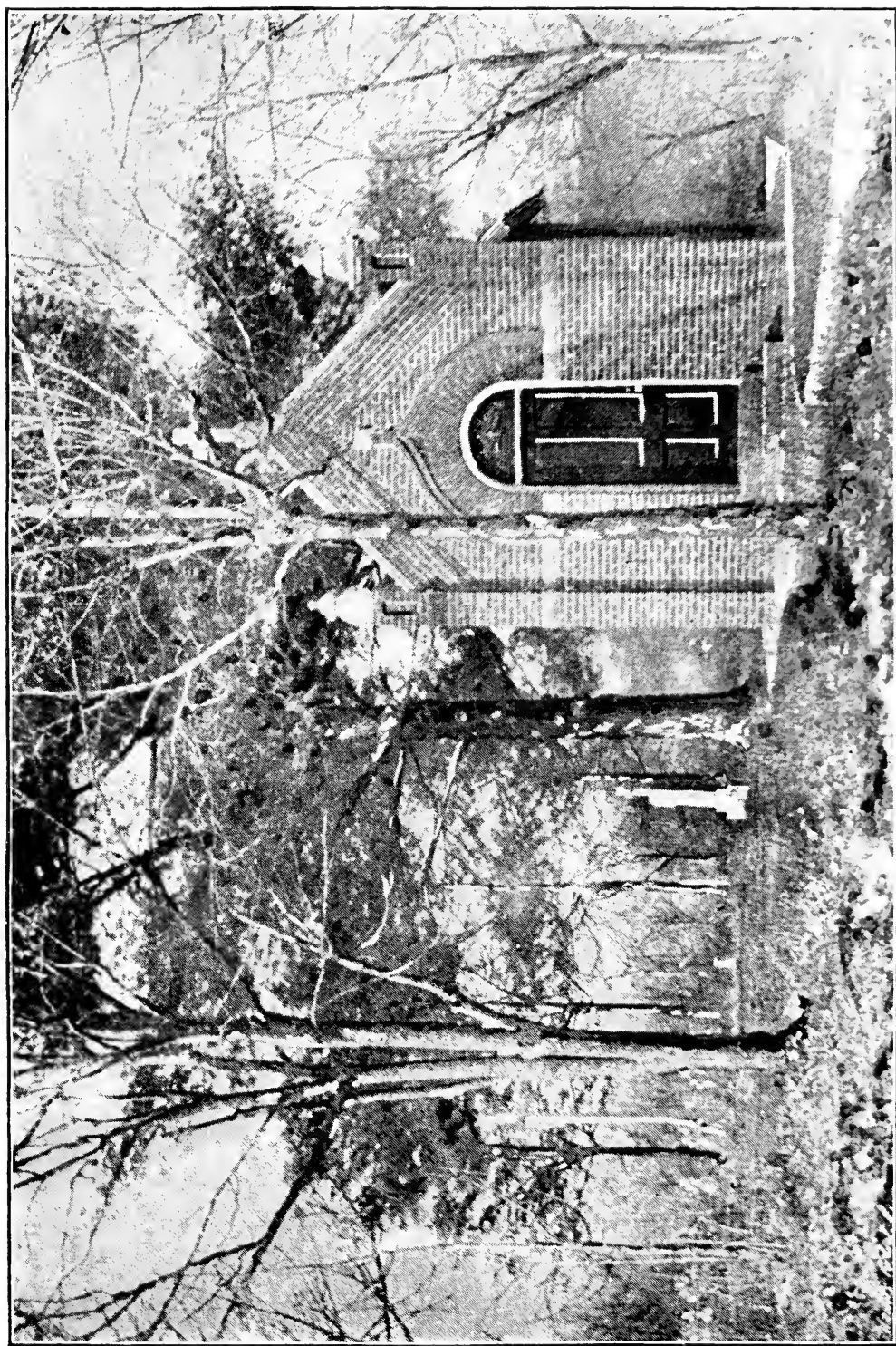
Another work of the community was the carding and spinning of wool, supplied by the sheep, which, in time, were also added to the farm. It is unquestionably true that the habits of those early religious were the work of their own hands, from the time the wool left the sheep's back until fashioned into the ancient garb of the Dominicans.

We may well wonder how, with labor so hard and diversified, its performance so slow, the sisters could make any headway in educational work. Yet the second year we find them opening a school, which never has closed its doors. On the farm which Mother Angela and Sister Benven had received from their father was an old still house. This building was repaired by the sisters; benches and desks, fashioned out of the rough lumber the forest afforded, were added, and the Academy of Saint Mary Magdalen, later re-named Saint Catharine of Sienna,

came into existence. Classes were begun the first Monday of July, 1823, and fifteen pupils were enrolled. Each pupil was required to deposit provisions for the year, but either the parents miscalculated on the appetite of their children, or the sisters were more generous than they, in supplying the table. Long before the time had expired the supply gave out. The convent's store was scarcely adequate for the community, but it was shared with the school, the sisters foregoing even necessities to provide for the children. Yet deprivation was cheerfully borne so long as it brought them into close friendship with the Master for whom they had given up all. The kind hand of Providence seemed ever near them. If the larder was empty, as it often was in literal truth, Mother Angela would comfort the sisters and assure them confidently that "God would provide," which He did in wonderful ways and often through unusual agents.

Sometimes we question why it should be, that those engaged in a holy cause, who have completely sacrificed themselves for that cause, as had these Dominican nuns on the Kentucky frontier, should meet with trials, obstacles and heart-breaking opposition, when other works, lacking this character, sweep onward to success. It would seem that whom or what God would have, He subjects to trial. "I counsel thee to buy for me gold tried in the furnace," He commands. Nor is it alone because what is offered to God must be free from alloy. We may also find a reason that appeals very strongly to our com-





SAINT MAGDALEN CHAPEL.



mon sense. Success is the supreme test and those who would meet it and not be conquered by it must come up to it as the athlete to the game. Trained in the hard school of experience, shaped by hard trial must be those who can wear the victor's crown without arrogance or forgetfulness. A conquest too easy becomes worthless in our eyes or else feeds our vanity; and where vanity rules, the throne has begun to crumble. However we may smart under trial, however rail against its seeming injustice, there is ever the underlying consciousness that we instead should

“Welcome each rebuff

That turns earth's smoothness rough

Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!”

As soon as they were in a position to do so, the sisters built a small chapel. No humbler shrine probably was ever erected in a Dominican convent; but none was ever the center of a stronger faith, a serener hope, a purer love. Poor and rude was the altar they built for their Eucharistic Lord, but what their hands could not supply, their hearts richly offered. And well was that offering of heart and hands repaid! From the tabernacle there poured forth a stream of divine grace, which enabled these young women not only to endure the physical hardships, the spiritual and mental deprivations of their lot, but like the saints of old, to welcome them, rejoice in them, and to see in life, not the harsh way it was but a golden stair that would lead to God. There, when night lay soft and many-starred over the still Kentucky land, their sweet

voices broke the silence, singing the praises of their Lord; and when morning touched the tree tops with her first smile, again their songs and prayers were raised before that rude altar in the wilderness. Rightly should that first chapel be dear to the hearts of the spiritual daughters of those Dominican nuns! As was fitting, they enshrined it within the walls of the Saint Mary Magdalen chapel which they later erected in the cemetery, where those pioneers of God are sleeping.

The old still-house was soon inadequate to accommodate the many pupils seeking admission to the school. The cause of their foundation being the need of Christian education, the duty of the sisters was apparent. They must enlarge their school. As they had no means of their own, and as the produce of the farm was required for the community, there remained only the course of an appeal to the public. Two by two, on foot, the sisters made a visitation of the county, seeking funds. Sometimes among friends, even going to the doors of their old homes, sometimes among strangers, they carried out their educational campaign; and it testified to the approval in which their work was held, that a generous response was made. All but a few thousand dollars of the necessary amount was obtained, and never doubting that they would be able to meet their indebtedness, the sisters proceeded to erect their new school. It was completed in the summer of 1825, and the better accommodations it offered added to the growing popularity of the academy.

## CHAPTER V

### A Time of Trial

The Kentucky of the period we now enter, was markedly different from the one which saw the convent of the Dominican Fathers established at Saint Rose. In the episcopal city of Bardstown, the Cathedral of Saint Joseph, the first in the West, had been built; and throughout the diocese other beautiful temples were replacing the log structures of pioneer days. Instead of two priests, there were many to minister to the faithful, and the several institutions of learning were well patronized, by Protestants and Catholics.

The advance of civil and social progress was even more rapid. Lexington and Louisville had become centers of national importance, and Kentucky, a power in the Federation of States. Clay, towering over the giants of his day, was a figure of world-wide attention in the assembly of the nation, while at home other gifted sons were weaving new glory for her name.

Roads, the great avenues of civilization, were building, and the long mule wagons, with their tinkling bells, followed the white ways, carrying merchandise from Philadelphia and New Orleans; while the stage coaches brought the travelers and the home-seekers. The remnant of the tribes that had fought for their rich hunting ground, had been

driven to the West; and with equal relentlessness, civilization had sent after it the hunter and the trapper who had blazed the way to the domain of the Red Man.

In this march of progress the Dominicans had kept pace. The work of the fathers in the state had enlarged, while beyond it their success had been even greater. To Sienna Vale, as the home of the Dominican Sisters was afterwards called, change had also come. The community had grown until it numbered seventeen members; and as a few negro servants had been brought by some of the later sisters, the community was relieved of the excessive labor connected with the farm and the domestic affairs of the house. The spirit of expansion that was later to be more fully manifested, causing the banner of Saint Dominic to be carried to widely separated places, was becoming evident, and we find the Rev. John Hill, O. P., writing from Cincinnati, Ohio, October 23, 1824, to Bishop Fenwick, then in London on missionary purposes for his diocese: "The nuns you speak of will be of no use, as I suppose they are of the Second Order with solemn vows, which will not do in this country. Those of the Third Order at Bethany, near Saint Rose, are doing well and some of them are desirous of coming to this diocese and would be far more useful."\*

Mother Angela Sansbury still held the office of prioress. She was not only one of the great women

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\*Archives of Saint Joseph Province.

of her Order, but also of a time and of a state that has produced great and heroic women, although, except in a few cases, their names have passed with their generation. That the mold of her nature could not be other than noble, we may conclude from the work she undertook and carried to a point where success was assured. Not only had she, inexperienced herself, to shape her infant community, to begin and carry on her school, but she had to furnish the very means for their existence, and that by the uncertain, and for women, the excessively hard operation of farming in primitive times. When the burden grew too heavy for her associates, it was to her they looked for help; when their spirits sank, it was to her they turned for succor; when the darkness of doubt and distrust enveloped them, it was she who must stand as their pillar of light.

But with the reliance of a holy soul upon Divine Providence, she held her way, comforted by the progress her community was making, spiritually and materially, and by the good it was accomplishing. It is true that she and her sisters were not entirely alone. Brought into existence by the Dominican Fathers of Saint Rose, the young sisterhood was at all times an object of the solicitude of the fathers, and they continued to be its spiritual guides and intellectual instructors. To form the community after the Dominican spirit was regarded by Father Wilson as one of the duties of the fathers of Saint Rose, and assiduously he saw it performed during the brief time allotted to him following its establishment.

Early in the year 1824, it became apparent that Father Wilson's health was failing. He had little need of preparation for his passage to his eternal home. His whole life, and especially the part spent in missionary work in Kentucky, had been a preparation for death. Fortified and strengthened by the reception of the sacraments, and surrounded by his brethren at Saint Rose, he surrendered his great soul to God on May 23, 1824. Father Wilson was one of those grand characters around whose hallowed name there clings nothing that is mean or sordid. Archbishop Kenrick spoke of him as "a man of happy memory," and Bishop Flaget called him "a shining light" in his diocese. His memory was long loved and cherished by the priests and people of Kentucky, who ever regarded him as father, friend, and guide.

In his appointment of Father Miles as first chaplain, Father Wilson had given the sisters a true friend and counsellor. Father Miles performed the duties of his office with the zeal and kindness which ever marked his priestly career, and made him an example for his clergy when called, in 1838, to rule the newly created see of Nashville. He realized the necessity for expansion in the educational work of the sisters, and as this could not be accomplished without increased facilities for the accommodation of pupils and teachers, he approved the plan of building the new school, and gave his personal pledge for the payment of the debt, which the sisters, as we have seen, were obliged to assume. He felt safe in doing this, for he had witnessed the careful manage-



ment of Mother Angela, and was convinced of her prudence and ability.

But the appointment of Father Fenwick as bishop of Cincinnati in 1822, began to draw Dominican interests more deeply to that diocese, which embraced the entire state of Ohio and nearly all of the northwest. The sorely burdened bishop turned frequently to his brethren at Saint Rose for help in discharging his duties, and in response, Saint Rose sent him some of her worthiest sons. Late in 1828, the call came for Father Miles, and if the congregation of Saint Rose saw his departure with sorrow, the sisters bade him farewell with stricken hearts. He had truly been their father and guide. He was one of them by birth and tradition, not less than by faith and Dominican fellowship. He understood them and their ideals, held their own vision of their future. They were of the new people, the new times, and had never felt the chains of custom. They knew themselves called to have a part in shaping the future of the Church and state, and would hold themselves ready for their opportunity.

This spirit of the sisters was to be put to a severe test in the succession of Father Muños to the office of prior of Saint Rose. Father Muños was a Spanish Dominican, and the monastic life of women in his native land was markedly different from the one he found before him in the rude convent of Saint Mary Magdalen. Of comforts there were few, while the hardships of the sisters astounded him. He looked over the rural community and saw no great

demand for work, entailing such sacrifice. Furthermore, he had no sympathy with the idea that had prompted Father Wilson to establish the new Order, and now coming to the office of prior of Saint Rose, which was supposed to carry with it at least the spiritual care of the sisters, he began to evince his opposition. He advised them to ask for a dispensation from their vows and to return to their homes and wait a more favorable time to make an establishment, if they persisted in their object. When he found that the new convent and school were encumbered by a debt of two thousand dollars, which was a heavy one in those days, and that Father Miles had signed their bond, he decided there was no alternative for the sisters but to sell their farm, pay their obligations and disband.

It is doubtful which feeling predominated in the convent of Saint Mary Magdalen, grief at the affliction that had come to them, or surprise at the demand made of them. In seven years they had grown from a community of eight to seventeen members; the log convent of one room had been replaced by a large, and, for the times, comfortable convent and school; their pupils were annually increasing; they had passed the experimental stage; they had made a place for themselves, and with time and constructive guidance, they would advance and be in a position to carry their usefulness to other fields. Their debt was burdensome, but eventually they would be relieved of it. They could not see that anything would be gained by asking release from their



BISHOP MILES



vows and returning to the world, while much harm might result in the loss of vocations and the injury to religion, in the wrong interpretation that might be placed upon their action.

When they held out in their intention to follow the life to which they knew God had called them, continue the work that had been entrusted to them, Father Muños refused to allow the sisters to have Mass or confession in their chapel, and obliged them to attend the services in Saint Rose Church. So they came to their fiery trial, but it only strengthened the earnestness and fortitude of this little band of heroic women. They knew the rule by which they had been disciplined and which had been adapted to their needs by Father Wilson and approved by the Holy See and the Pro-Vicar General of the Order. They kept in mind the spirit of their founder. His life of hardship and sacrifice had ever been an inspiration to them, now it was their guiding hand. He had taught them that Christ was their model, and as His every step was beset with trials and sorrows, the same was to be exacted of those who would be His followers.

Naturally, the trouble got abroad, and with each repetition of the story, the situation took on graver aspects. The creditors took alarm and appealed to Bishop Fenwick for the settlement of the debt. Miles from the scene, sinking under the heavy cross the episcopacy had laid upon him, fearful of consequences that might result, it is not surprising that Bishop Fenwick should seek what appeared to him

the only way out of the difficulty. He outlined it in his letter to the Superior General of the Order, the Most Rev. Joachim Briz. The letter is dated October 19, 1829, and is as follows:

Most Reverend Father:

Because the office of Commissary General of the Order of Saint Dominic, for these United States of America, has been entrusted to me, I have transacted many things for the good of the Order, all of which I have accurately stated to your Paternity in former letters. Now, indeed, I am compelled to write particularly of the condition of the Sisters of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, so that something may be done to assist them.

Your Reverend Paternity knows that seventeen young ladies, professed according to the Rule of the Third Order, and consonant with the institute of our Holy Father Saint Dominic, lead a common life in a certain house or monastery, near Saint Rose Convent, in the Province or State of Kentucky, after the fashion and example of nuns, although bound by only simple vows. Because of the withdrawal to the Cincinnati Diocese of the Rev. Augustine J. Hill, who had assisted Father Wilson in organizing them, the Rev. R. P. Miles was placed in charge of them by the authority of the Very Rev. Provincial, Father Wilson.

From money obtained, for the most part from collections, a house sufficiently large and commodious was erected some years ago, so that the Sisters might devote themselves to the work of instructing young women in the rudiments of letters and religion. On account of this and other necessary causes, a debt was contracted. The needs of the faithful in my diocese constrained me to call thence Rev. R. P. Miles, who, in his name, but for the Sisters, had contracted a debt of two thousand dollars. I have entrusted to him the care of souls in this diocese of Cincinnati, trusting that the Very Rev. Father Muños, whom I had appointed Prior at Saint Rose Convent, would provide for the wants of the sisters, in temporal as well as spiritual things.

I have learned, however, and with sadness, that he thinks it pertains to his office neither to look after them himself, nor to commit the care of them to another, and hence it is that the sisters are very often unable to carry out the duties of religion, and are meanwhile burdened with great want. No small detriment affects the honor of our Order as long as they remain in such great debt. Although the debt is entirely a debt of the

sisters, it was contracted for them in the name of the above mentioned priest, who can be summoned before the public tribunals and even committed to prison. No other means occurs to me for avoiding so great an evil except the sale of the monastery where dwell the sisters, together with the farm, pertaining to it, the sisters, of course, moving elsewhere.

It is easy to imagine the displeasure and rancor that will arise should this be done, because many of the faithful who have given money for the erection of the building will be displeased if the place is offered for sale. Nevertheless, so great and pressing are the wants of the sisters, and so urgent the necessity of liquidating this debt that I think they will consent to it rather willingly. Still, an amount of money, sufficient to pay all the creditors cannot be expected from the sale. Therefore, I think it necessary, the authority of your Paternity having been obtained, to sell some property belonging to Saint Rose Convent so that the deficit may be made up. Perhaps it may seem unjust to take anything from the fathers of this convent, but it behooves us to remember that the sisters left the world on the advice and exhortation of the fathers and have been thrown into their hard lot by the work they have undertaken. Is it not better to avoid infamy and litigation even with the detriment of some good work, when, at the same time, the misery of the sisters will be relieved? In my diocese, there is no place where they could be received, unless, for a time, perhaps, on a certain portion of the farm occupied by our fathers near Somerset, and adjoining the church of Saint Joseph. I am willing to place them there until a favorable opportunity arises of locating them in places, where, by the example of their virtues in which they excel, and also by the Christian education of young women, they may promote the interests of religion.

I, therefore, ask your Paternity that, by your precept, you will command that no obstacle be placed in the way of the things I may attempt for the relief of the sisters; that I may enjoy full and free right to sell the monastery in which dwell the sisters, and also the farm pertaining to it, together with two or more pieces of property, as necessity demands, so that the debt which burdens the sisters may be liquidated, to transfer them to another place, or to establish them on the above mentioned land near the church of Saint Joseph, in the State of Ohio, until some provision can be made for them. In this way, I trust that Rev. Pius Miles who, whilst at the head of the sisters, bound himself in his own handwriting to the payment of the entire debt, may be enabled to devote himself to his sacred duties with-

out molestation from the creditors, that the sisters may be delivered from want and worry and devote themselves to, and observe with greater diligence and fervor the institute they have embraced. A great solicitude in their regard presses upon me, because they are more than two hundred miles from my Episcopal city and, for this reason, it is most inconvenient for me to go to them because of the distance, the cost of the journey, and especially the utter lack of any means contributed by the faithful.

I expect an early reply from your Most Rev. Paternity for the affair can now permit of no delay. In the meantime, I profess from my heart to be to your Paternity,

Your most humble and obedient servant,  
 Father Edward Fenwick,  
 Bishop of Cincinnati, Ohio,  
 And Vic. Gen. P. S. J.

Given at Baltimore, October 10, 1829.

I am here on account of the Provincial Council.

Postscript.

Since writing the above, it came to my mind to ask your Paternity if it would be more advisable for the sisters, under the present circumstances, to disperse their community for a while and devote themselves to the various duties in my diocese, since they would fulfill the same tasks as the Sisters of Charity, founded by Saint Vincent de Paul, to devote themselves to the education of young women in both letters and religion, and who in this work throughout this region, enjoy the full approbation and joyous commendation of the Bishop, the entire body of the laity, and even of the Protestants. Should this be permitted by your Reverend Paternity, I pray that you allow the sisters to assume the habit of black color, until circumstances being changed for the better, they may be again united in their former monastery. I propose this all the more freely to your Reverend Paternity, since they are but members of the Third Order of Saint Dominic.

To the Most Reverend Master General of the Friars Preachers, Rome, Italy.\*

But these holy men, though animated by the best of purposes in trying to remedy the condition,

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\*Archives of the Master General, Rome, Italy. It is of history that this letter of Right Rev. E. D. Fenwick, Bishop of Cincinnati, was written at the request of Father Muños.



never seem to have taken into account the wish or the will of the women, whom they proposed to disperse, send back to the world or fuse with other communities. Never once did these daughters of the heroic Dominic contemplate such a destruction of the latest institution of his Order. It was a trial, a cruel and needless one; but their holy Father had shown them how to meet and conquer such, and their own Catharine of the dauntless heart, had set them many an example. They would neither sell their farm, nor disband. They would pay their own debt, and in the accomplishment of this, they disposed of everything not absolutely necessary to sustenance, and though the dawn of 1830 found them as poor as when they began, it found them still a community.

“Man’s necessity is God’s opportunity,” has well been said. We shall never know how near the high-hearted courage of Mother Angela and her devoted nuns was to the breaking point, as they looked at that New Year which saw them practically stripped of everything and the debt still unpaid. There is God’s moment even for the heart which cried with Job, “Though He slay me will I trust in Him.” It came to the sorely tried Dominican nuns. Father Muños was appointed to another charge, and the Rev. Stephen Montgomery was made prior of Saint Rose.

Father Montgomery was a native of Kentucky. Educated at the College of Saint Thomas, he had entered the Dominican Order and had accompanied Bishop Fenwick to Cincinnati. His pioneer work

is a memorable part of the history of Catholicity in the northwest territory. He was more or less familiar with the Saint Mary Magdalen foundation, and well acquainted with the unyielding spirit of its members. His faith in them was unquestioned, his realization of the need of them keen, and with characteristic promptness he began to relieve the situation. He succeeded in getting the money for the payment of the remainder of the debt. The sisters, in turn, did the cooking, washing and ironing at Saint Rose, until they had cancelled their obligation to him.

## CHAPTER VI

### First Branch House

One of the distinguishing marks of a great soul is to recognize greatness in others, even in opponents. While at no time could the attitude of the sisters be called one of opposition, still they had maintained their purpose, even contrary to the opinion of Father Munos, but that circumstance in no way altered the high regard Bishop Fenwick entertained for the community or lessened his interest in its progress. Rather did this appear to quicken it, and in 1830, he solicited a foundation of these sisters for his diocese.

Prayerfully was the selection made by Mother Angela. In her solicitude for the first branch house of the American Dominicans, she offered the sacrifice of her natural affection, and one of the founders was her own sister, Sister Benven Sansbury. The others were Sister Emily Elder, Sister Agnes Harbin and Sister Catharine Mudd. The future home of the little community was at Somerset, Ohio, where the Dominican Fathers had been established since 1818, and where they had a flourishing parish.

These sisters left the mother-house January 11, 1830. Some idea of the difficulties of travel even at that time, may be gleaned from the fact that not until early in February did they arrive at Somerset. They

were surprised to find a comfortable home ready for them.

A small brick house, with an acre of ground, had been given to them, while a carpenter shop nearby had been fitted up for a school which was opened the following April. The new foundation was named Saint Mary and the sisters at once entered upon their conventual life. They opened a novitiate; however, the sisters continued to receive re-enforcement from the mother-house, both houses being under the government of the Master General of the Order. Among the first to enter Saint Mary was Sister Rose Lynch whose name is inseparably associated with the Dominicans of Ohio. In 1833, Mother Angela Sansbury followed her little community to Somerset. By it she was again called to the arduous duties of prioress, which office she held until her holy and beautiful death, on March 30, 1839.

This first foundation of the Dominican Sisters was destined to become a motive power for religion and education in Ohio, and in turn to be the prolific mother of other missions. With an increasing number of pupils and a growing community, the sisters enlarged their home until in 1866, Saint Mary was one of the recognized institutions of learning in Ohio. That year, fire reduced the splendid institution to ashes, and the community, all but crushed by the disaster, knew not where to turn for relief.

But the stroke of misfortune was really a door opened for them into a world of wider possibilities. A friend, Theodore Leonard, an old resident of Co-



ST. CATHERINE IN 1830



lumbus, came to the rescue, donating to them thirty-two acres of land near the capital city. Mr. Leonard also gave ten thousand dollars toward the erection of the buildings, to which a like sum was added by Eugene Mageveny of Memphis, Tennessee. The sisters gratefully accepted the generous gift, and thus the beautiful Saint Mary of the Springs, on the edge of Columbus, sprang from the ashes of Saint Mary of Somerset.\*

Death and the new foundation at Somerset had thinned the ranks of the community of Saint Mary Magdalen, yet animated by the spirit of Saint Dominic, the sisters continued with their God-appointed work. In the story of a life or of an institution, we sometimes find invaluable aid coming from an unexpected and perhaps humble source. This now enters the history of this struggling Dominican community, and no name is held more gratefully in remembrance by it than that of a lowly benefactor. One evening, at sunset, an old man, sitting in a covered wagon, drawn by an odd-looking little mule, stopped at the convent gate and asked for accommodations for the night. The stranger was as singular as he appeared, with his clothes bagged and fluttering, and a sack thrown over his shoulder; yet there was something kind and gentlemanly about him. The superior granted his request. The following morning he announced to the prioress his intention of stopping at Saint Mary Magdalen convent for the remainder of his days. "This is the inn," he

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\*Religious Orders of Women in United States—Page 102, Dehey.

said, "to which the Lord has directed me, and here I will remain." So earnest and persistent was his appeal, that the sisters gave him employment. His name was Christopher Simmering. He was a tin-smith by trade. and from the time of his coming until his death, all the tinware used in the community was made by him.

When the sisters had nothing special for him to do, he would make up a wagon of useful articles and go on a peddling expedition. He always returned from these journeys with something useful for the community. The first piano in the house was a gift from Mr. Simmering. He was very abrupt in manner, but when he happened to know that the treasury was empty or that there were pressing needs, he would appear at the office of the prioress, throw in a well-filled purse and flee before she could command words to thank him. He was a true friend and a good workman. Whenever there was an emergency, his was the hand that helped to meet it. In his last illness he was tenderly cared for by the sisters. His mind wandered for some time, but just before his death he regained consciousness and received the sacraments with great devotion. In 1890, when the sisters erected their beautiful new academy, they dedicated one of the halls to the memory of this humble friend. In the tiling of the floor at the entrance, was inscribed in blue lettering: "To the memory of Christopher Simmering."

After the year 1833, the sisters began to feel that the roughest of their trials were past. Their



number of negro servants had been increased, which relieved them entirely of the necessity of hard manual labor; they were able, in consequence, to give themselves more completely to their professional work. In 1833, they opened a school for boys under twelve years of age. The school was entirely separate from the girls' department. It was in charge of Sister Helen Whelan and among its pupils, several of whom were non-Catholics, were sons of some of the most prominent families of Louisville, Bardstown and Springfield. As the pupils of the academy increased, the boys' school had to be discontinued.

The later years of Saint Magdalen's second decade of existence found it on the high road to success. Its patronage extended to Louisville and beyond, while it drew largely from the inland towns of Harrodsburg, Danville, Greensburg, Lebanon and other growing centers of population. In 1839 it received its charter from the state of Kentucky, giving to it all the privileges of an institution of higher education.

The sisters, even in those early days, realized that to meet the requirements of their advancing position, they must be well trained. To secure this advantage, they engaged the services of men and women distinguished in their various professions. From St. Louis, Missouri, came Doctor Bollonton to instruct them in French and music. Mrs. Create of Louisville, gave instructions in vocal music. Another of those lay instructors employed at Saint Mary Magdalen was Mr. H. V. Brown, who, in answer to

an advertisement, came to teach painting. He was not of the faith, but had very satisfactory references and was engaged to give instructions to the sisters for one year. His studio was near the chapel, and, as day after day, he listened to the sisters chant the office and say the Rosary, his prejudices broke down, and he began to examine the doctrines of the Church. He was instructed and baptized by one of the fathers from Saint Rose, then went to the College of the Propaganda to study for the priesthood. While there he was a fellow student of Rev. B. J. Spalding, with whom he ever retained the closest friendship. He was ordained at Rome and, returning to this country, labored with zeal and success as a missionary in Tennessee, and died pastor of the church at Chattanooga, Tennessee. He always spoke of the sisters with great reverence and admitted that their lives were an inspiration to him.\*

May of 1833 brought great happiness to the sisters in the election of their good friend, Father Miles, as prior of Saint Rose. Father Miles at once assumed the office of confessor. Every Sunday found him at the convent hearing confessions, giving instructions, opening the minds of the sisters to the knowledge of divine things and their hearts to the promptings of holy charity. It was his delight to mark their generous correspondence with grace and their exactness in keeping their vows. Soon after the arrival of Father Miles at Saint Rose, the Rev. W. R. Tuite, one of the original colony, died. So great

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\*Centenary of Catholicity in Kentucky—Webb.

was his reputation for sanctity, that the people used to carry away earth from his grave as a cure for all kinds of ailments.

Five years later, September 16, 1838, Father Miles was consecrated bishop of Nashville, in the cathedral of Bardstown, by Bishop Rosati of St. Louis, Missouri. The sisters have ever regarded him, after Father Wilson, as their first benefactor and greatest friend. Shortly after his consecration, Bishop Miles left for his episcopal city and the Rev. J. T. Jarboe succeeded him as prior of Saint Rose.

In times past, the country had often been visited by epidemics of cholera. In the fall of 1832, Bishop Fenwick fell a victim of such a plague while returning from a visitation of his vast diocese. A similar epidemic ravaged Kentucky with such prevalence, that in Washington County scarcely a family escaped. Skill and science were powerless before the plague, and fear and terror filled the hearts even of physicians. The Dominican Fathers, true shepherds of their flock, labored night and day among the sick and dying. One of them, Rev. W. R. Tuite, gave up his life in the cause of charity. The sisters, with equal heroism, abandoned their duties in the school and convent, and going among the stricken families of the neighborhood, nursed them back to health or helped them on their passage to eternity. No question of creed or color determined the sacrificial work of these fearless women and before such Christian devotion, prejudice, often born of ignorance, fled.

Thus it is not strange that the Sisters of Saint Dominic should be held in such reverence by the people of Washington County, and that in hours of need they should find friends flocking to their assistance. In a world that so easily forgets, that time of plague and its attendant horrors passed out of mind; but to those who had experienced its scourge, there ever remained in memory the picture of the white-robed Sisters of Saint Dominic ministering at the bedside from which all others had fled. Their story of devotion has been recorded by Bishop Flaget, who, in a letter to the Propaganda giving an account of the epidemic, praises the zeal shown by the sisters. "With no more than ten or eleven sisters in their community," writes the venerable prelate, "they exercised a holy industry to multiply their strength and give themselves to the sick. During several weeks they were seen night and day in those houses where the sick were most numerous and where misery was at its height. Not one of them contracted the disease, but all were worn out and exhausted beyond the power of words to describe. Without the special protection of Divine Providence, it would have been impossible for them so long to continue such service of mercy and compassion."

## CHAPTER VII

### Development of the Society

Mother Helen Whalen had succeeded Mother Magdalen Edelen as prioress in 1832 and she was again elected in 1838, Mother Rose Tennelly following her in office on both occasions. These two superiors, with Mother Columba Walsh who served from 1844 to 1847, faithfully carried on the work begun by Mother Angela, and the close of each term of office saw the Dominican sisterhood more firmly established, its good works increased, its membership enlarged.

Gradually relieved of the stern necessity which had bowed the early religious under the hand of heavy toil and privation, the sisters were able to give themselves more fully to their profession of teaching. With enlarged means, they were also able to advance their standard of living to that required by the times, and comforts and improvements that would have appeared as a foolish dream if promised to the first sisters and their pupils, were now ordinary conditions at Saint Mary Magdalen Academy. This new picture reflects the advancement in Kentucky. The natural resources of the land had made the accumulation of wealth easy for the descendants of the pioneers and they were of a race which holds it a duty to enjoy the gifts that fortune provides. The school, consequently, had to be on the plane of

the home if it would retain its prestige; to do this was to fulfill its mission.

The first graduates of Saint Mary Magdalen Academy were Miss Mary Alexander and Miss Eliza Holdman, both of Louisville, Kentucky. They received their honors, July 24, 1845. Sister Mary Pius Fitzpatrick, now the oldest living member of the community, was in school at this time, a young girl of thirteen as she had come in 1838 when but six years old. In those days the commencement exercises included a public examination of the pupils. Parents, guardians and friends usually attended in numbers and were afterwards entertained at dinner by the sisters. At the closing exercises of 1849, the Rt. Rev. M. J. Spalding presided, assisted by Rev. Father Verden, S. J., and the fathers from Saint Rose, notably Fathers Jarboe and Bowling. The graduates were Mary Fitzpatrick (Sister M. Pius), Mary Barber, Mary Perkins, Mary Lynch and Mary Coleman. The bishop in his address spoke of them as the five Marys. Other students fondly remembered by Sister M. Pius are Mary Polin, Kitty, Belle and Mildred Montgomery, Mary Phillips, Mary Reed, Juliana Jarboe, Prudence Stokes, Kate and Rose Fitzgerald. The uniform for Sunday during the winter months was a black woolen dress; for the summer, a pink percale. No uniform was required during the week.

We have seen that the first building undertaken by the sisters was the construction of a chapel. It was rude and poor, but as they knelt within its bare walls

or viewed its crude exterior, they beheld in imagination the beautiful structure into which it would grow. The early forties saw this ideal beginning to assume the vesture of reality, in the securing by the Rev. Nicholas D. Young, who was prior of Saint Rose from 1843 to 1846, of plans of several European chapels of the Sisters of Saint Dominic, notably Prouille and Saint Sixtus. Assisted by the sisters, he had worked out for them a plan suited to the conditions of this country. Still must the great work wait, because means to build were wanting.

On January 6, 1847, Sister Theresa Lynch was elected prioress, and as the dauntless Dominican spirit was hers in full measure, she did not quail at the task which confronted her. She had resolved that the period of waiting was past and that the mother-house of the American Dominican Order should have a chapel worthy of it. Heart and soul with her, the sisters rallied to her assistance and with just one dollar in the treasury began to dig the foundation for the new chapel. They appealed to their relations and friends; former pupils were called upon; the response that was made encouraged the sisters. Those who could, gave money, others gave provisions, others labor. It is told that the sisters went out with a horse and sled to beg provisions to feed the men while they were working on the chapel. A wave of enthusiasm swept the countryside. The building of the new chapel became an object of public as well as of personal interest. It is recorded that the score or more of slaves owned by the community volun-

tarily offered to do without new clothes for one year that their money might be donated to the chapel fund.

It may not be amiss to pause here to speak of those colored servants belonging to the institution. They were singularly devoted to the sisters, who, in turn, regarded them not as mere property, but as human beings, requiring care for soul as well as for body. With no hard task-master over them, they faithfully performed their duties on the farm and about the house, taking a deep interest in all that concerned the community. Among those especially remembered and yet spoken of are, Aunt Heney, laundress; Aunt Jennie and Aunt Letty, famous cooks; Uncle Martin, the coachman and man of all work about the place. Sister Mary Pius relates an amusing occurrence in connection with a solar eclipse of this time. The negroes were greatly alarmed believing that the day of final judgment had arrived. Leaving the plow in the furrow, the bread in the oven, they rushed wildly in search of the sisters, crying out: "O Sister! foh sure de las' day hab come! De sky am da'kened, de chickens hab gone to roost, and it's only fo' o'clock! O Sister, let's go to Saint Rose to confession! De en' ob de world am come!" It was with difficulty that the sisters quieted their fears.

Such was the success attending the whirlwind campaign for funds, that the cornerstone of the new chapel dedicated to Saint Catharine of Sienna was laid in June, 1847. Bishop Flaget officiated, assisted

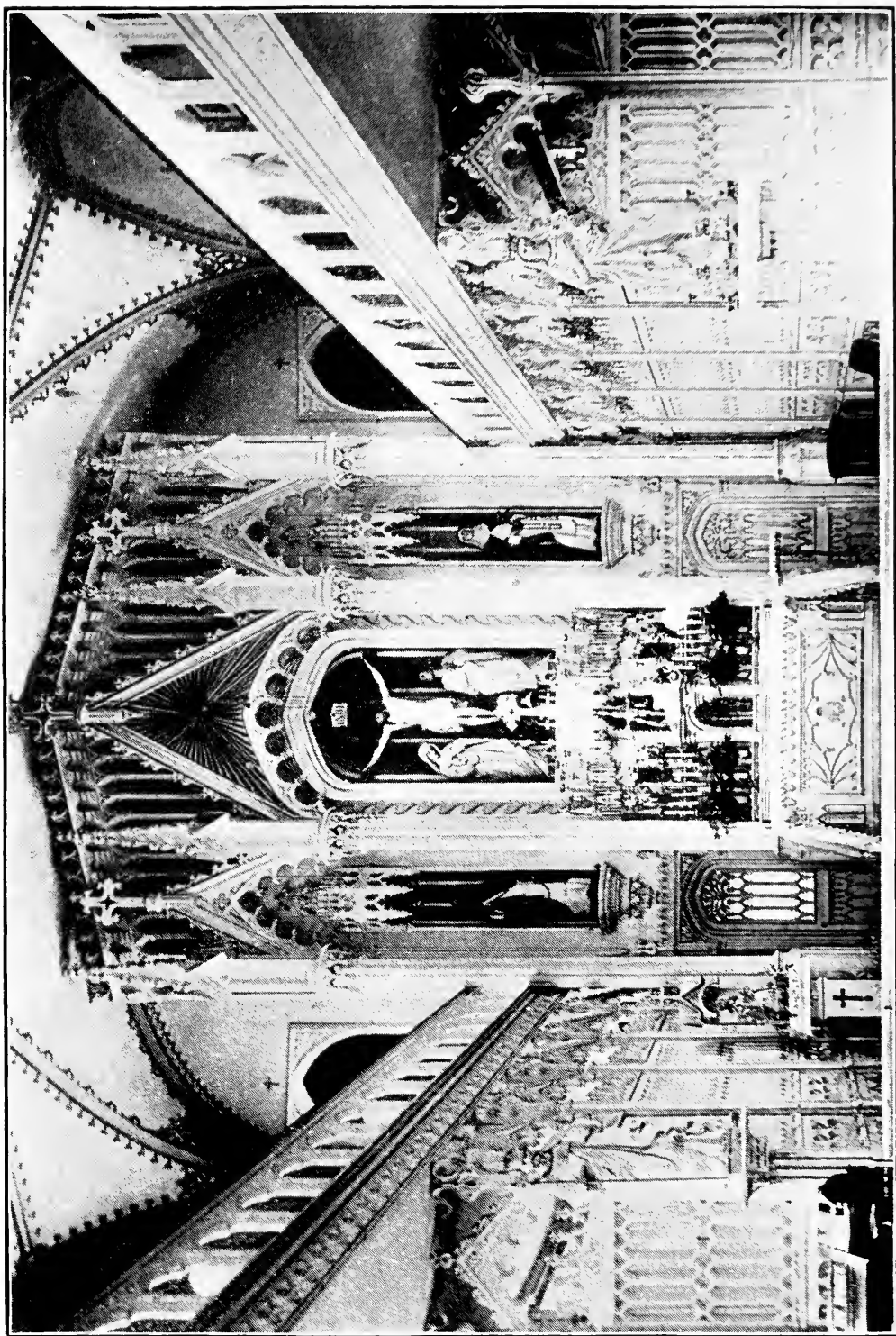


by Father Bowling, O. P., prior of Saint Rose. The work of construction was pushed and in the autumn of 1848, the chapel was ready for dedication. The exquisitely carved main altar was in the center of the building and extended to the ceiling. A grille of artistic design separated the sisters' choir from the body of the church. The structure was rightly regarded as a good example of conventual architecture and was an object of love and veneration to the community. The dedication took place in November, 1848, and was performed by the Rt. Rev. M. J. Spalding, coadjutor bishop of Louisville.

Mother Theresa Lynch was succeeded in the office of prioress by Mother Angela Lynch, January 6, 1850. Hers is one of the venerated names in the annals of the Sisters of Saint Dominic in Kentucky. She entered the Order in 1835 and was, at the time of her election, in the ardent years of her womanhood. Her call to the religious life had come early and imperatively and as no trial or obstacle could hinder her from following it, so nothing interfered with the performance of her duty as a member of the community or as its superior. She was the most efficient teacher in the academy and now that the reins of government had been placed in her hands, naturally the school commanded her chief attention. The work assigned by Divine Providence to her sisterhood was education, and intensive training for its teachers was necessary. No half-way methods were tolerated by her in the class-room, and she expected from her sisters the same efficiency which she ex-

acted from her pupils. Austere by temperament and zealous for God and her Order, she was still considerate and patient, well loved by her society and respected by all with whom her position brought her into contact.

It was during Mother Angela's administration that the second call came for a new foundation. The Dominican Fathers were carrying on their missionary work in the diocese of Nashville, Tennessee, then governed by Bishop Miles, a member of the Order. As the Rev. Thomas Grace, O. P., pastor of Saint Peter Church, Memphis, was handicapped in his work by lack of teachers, he asked the Very Rev. M. O'Brien, provincial of St. Joseph Province, to send him a colony of Dominican nuns. It will be remembered that the provincial, at that time, had jurisdiction over all the Sisters of Saint Dominic in the United States. Six sisters were withdrawn from the Kentucky and Ohio communities for the southern foundation; Sister Lucy Harper, Sister Ann Simpson and Sister Vincentia Fitzpatrick from Saint Mary Magdalen Convent, and Sister Magdalen Clarke, Sister Emily Thorpe and Sister Catharine McCormack from Saint Mary Convent. Accompanied by the Rev. Francis Cubero, they reached Memphis, by boat, at midnight on January 1, 1851. Father Grace had just returned from a sick call, and when again roused, he was greatly surprised to find that his late visitants were the sisters he was expecting. He gave them hospitality for the remainder of the night and on the following morning took them to their new home. This



INTERIOR OF CHAPEL. DEDICATED IN 1848



was a neat, two-story house containing eight rooms and a garret, which had formerly been the residence of General Coe.

The first house of the sisters in Tennessee was placed under the protection of Saint Agnes. They opened their school in February. The little community had to meet the trials of poverty which in some degree confront every religious beginning; but these trials were patiently borne and finally overcome. The white-robed sisters soon found themselves established in the esteem and affection of the generous southern people, and Saint Agnes Academy was well patronized. The following year, 1852, it received its charter from the state of Tennessee and it was soon drawing pupils from adjoining states, while increasing the number from its own. In June, 1853, Saint Agnes graduated its first students. They were Miss Mary Doyle of Arkansas and Miss Rabb of Mississippi. It is interesting to note that the grand-daughters of the latter attended school at Saint Agnes in 1909. The former, uniting in marriage with a Mr. Gavin, lived opposite Saint Agnes for many years, and ever manifested an active interest in her Alma Mater.

Within two years after entering Memphis, the sisters were called to a new undertaking. The care of orphan children has ever been one of the chief concerns of the Church; and while the conducting of asylums for them was not a work of their Order any more than was nursing the plague-stricken, still, when the need for their service arose, the sisters met

it. The condition of the poor, parentless and neglected children of Memphis could no longer be tolerated by Father Grace, so gathering them together he placed them under the charge of the Sisters of Saint Agnes. They took up their new work in the fall of 1852. Owing to the increase in number, the orphans, in 1855, were removed to Gracewood Farm, about five miles out of the city, and the hardships endured by the sisters here, were well nigh incredible. In addition to teaching and caring for the children, many of whom were afflicted with various diseases, the sisters were obliged to do hard manual labor for their support. Owing to the crowded condition of the farm, the sisters could not have a chapel and thus the misery of their lot was deepened by being deprived of the presence of the Blessed Sacrament under their roof. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered at rare intervals. The situation continued until 1862 when the asylum was moved to Henry Avenue, Memphis, where for a number of years the sisters from Saint Agnes continued to care for the orphans.

In 1851, death visited the young community of Saint Agnes and on August 8, Sister Catharine McCormack rested from her labors. This was a severe loss. Answering the appeal for assistance, the mother-house sent Sister Veronica Ray and Sister Francis Conlan to Memphis. The growth attained by the southern school demanding more teachers, another band was sent in 1852 consisting of Sister M. Vincent Nichols, Sister Monica Conlan and Sister

M. Pius Fitzpatrick. In the course of time a novitiate was opened, but it could not supply the community and in 1855, 1857 and 1858, aid was again sent from the mother-house. Among the other sisters who spent themselves in establishing this renowned institution of learning in Memphis were: Sister M. Louise Cain, Sister Benven Sansbury, Sister Rose Callahan, Sister M. Bernard Madigan, Sister Alberta Rumpf, Sister Ann Hanlon, Sister M. Catharine Cain, Sister Helen Whelan, Sister Rose Rogers, Sister Lucy Mills, Sister Dominica Fitzpatrick and Sister Josephine Whelan.

The consecration of Father Grace as bishop of St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1859, was a great loss to the Saint Agnes community as they had looked to him for help and guidance in all their spiritual and temporal needs.

In the meanwhile, at home, the mother-house was keeping in advance of her ambitious young daughter. By a grant of the legislature of Kentucky, March 11, 1851, the sisters were empowered to change the name of their community from Saint Mary Magdalen to that of Saint Catharine of Sienna. The appropriateness of the change is apparent. Saint Catharine of Sienna, the glory of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, and notable for her sanctity and statescraft in an age that produced great saints and great statesmen, may well be held up as a patron of American womanhood. What her hand found to do she did, whether dictating policies of state, correcting evils, promoting religion and education, or per-

forming the ordinary duties of a woman in her convent home.

The academy was well patronized. In 1853 it had one hundred students enrolled. At the close of Mother Angela's term of office both convent and academy buildings had been added to and remodeled. They now formed three sides of a quadrangle and the grounds were artistically laid off and adorned with rare shrubs and flowers. Sienna Vale well merited the rapture it awakened in the heart; beauty met the eye at every turn and peace enfolded it like a mother's arm. It was a spot to allure and it is not strange that many of the pupils returned to it to spend their days, while all cherished the memory of it.

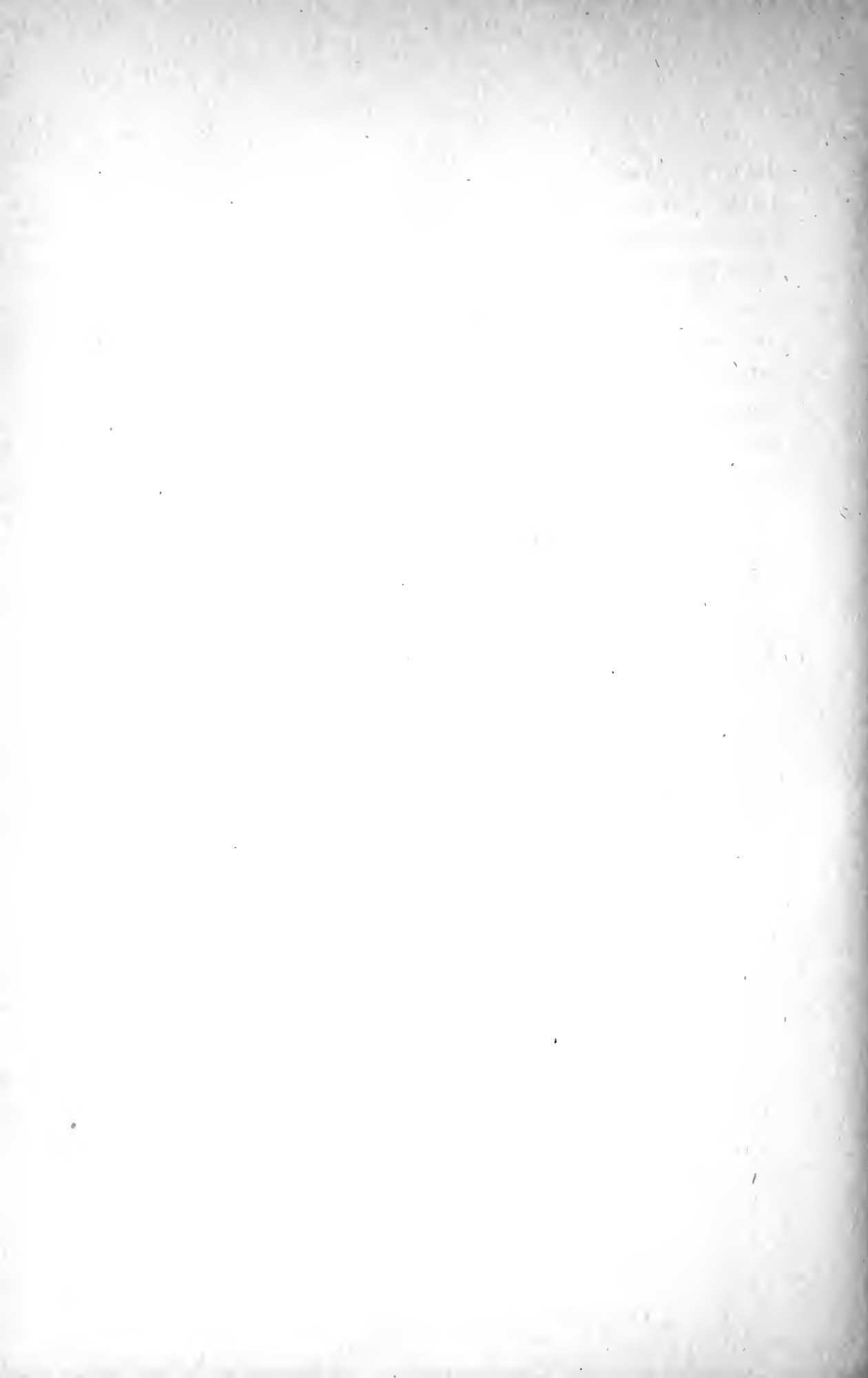
Mother Angela was succeeded in 1853 by Mother Helen Whelan who was re-elected in 1856. With Mother Angela, she was one of the dominating personalities in the development of the Order prior to the war between the states. Her great endowments of heart and mind had a quickening influence over all and she continued to lead the institution to higher planes, spiritually and educationally. She devoted herself particularly to the training of the sisters with the result that Saint Catharine of Sienna Academy attained a higher standard as an institution of learning. A number of sisters entered the community during the fifties who were destined to play an important part in the future development of the Order, notably Sister M. Thomas O'Meara, Sister M.



Benven Rumpf, Sister Vincent Ferrer Thompson, Sister Regina O'Meara and Sister Ann O'Brien.

During the summer of 1854 the cholera again visited Washington County. As on the former occasion, the sisters, unmindful of personal danger, volunteered as nurses and went among the stricken families. The second appearance of the plague was attended by less fear, as it lacked the terror of something unknown, yet it claimed many victims. Among them was Sister Theresa Lynch, the former prioress of Saint Catharine, who had contracted the disease while attending the sick in the neighborhood.

Her name leads the roll of Saint Catharine's martyrs, those heroic women, who, without thought of self and unobligated because of the nature of their professional duties, went forth to fight the plague and paid for their hardihood with their lives. No tablet may immortalize their deeds, their names may be forgotten; but by One they are remembered, who has said: "Greater love than this hath no man that he lay down his life for his friends."



## CHAPTER VIII

### Early Members of the Congregation

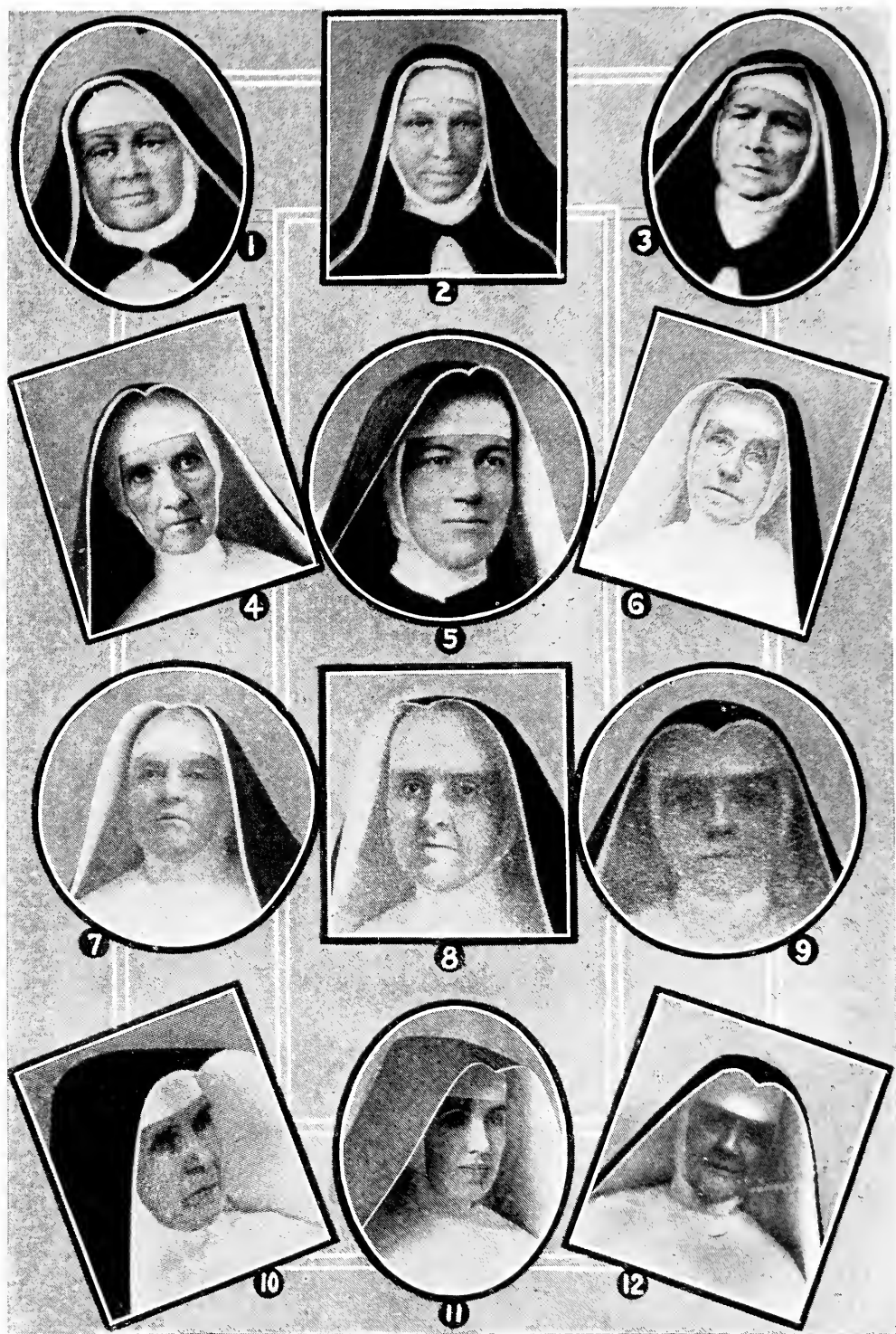
The zeal of Father Wilson had left no means untried to perfect a foundation which he hoped, in the designs of Providence, would become an important factor in the work of Christian education. In the first days of the society, he had placed before the sisters a plan of government and a summary of the obligations incumbent upon them in this double capacity of religious and instructors of the young, both by precept and by example. The sisters were not dismayed but took up cheerfully the work that lay before them, even though they were called upon to meet difficulties which tried their physical strength and tested their faith and fortitude. They saw their very existence imperiled; sorrow came to them in many forms and poverty was their close companion for many years, yet they never turned back, "but marched breast forward."

Mother Angela Sansbury, the first prioress, realized that every age has its special needs, and, while inculcating the virtues of the hidden life and a sanctity based on the strict observance of the vows and the rules of the society, she so ordered the little community, as to meet very effectively the demands of the times. Mother Angela, as we have seen, gave six years to the exacting responsibilities of prioress of Saint Catharine of Sienna Community,

but her whole life was devoted to the Order and its welfare.

The second prioress was Mother Magdalen Edden, who made her profession on August 30, 1823. She was of a robust constitution and lived until the summer of 1865. She was remarkable for her indomitable energy and the excellence of her judgment. When called to the office of prioress, her management of the affairs of the institution was regarded as admirable; and this was the case, even when she was suffering the tortures of an incurable disease. She was distinguished especially for her attention to choir duty. Her death occurred on the eve of her patronal feast, July 21, 1865, and her burial on the feast itself. A singular incident took place on this occasion. Scarcely had the grave been covered, when the low plaintive notes of the *Salve Regina* floated to the ears of the sisters, who were still paying the last sad tribute to the remains of Sister Magdalen. They knew its import at such a time. It told that the inevitable call had come to another of their band, that another soul was in its death agony. Hastening to the infirmary, they found that Sister Vallina Montgomery, the life-long friend and associate of Sister Magdalen, had passed to her reward. Sister Vallina was a most efficient and earnest teacher, and her promptness and fidelity to duty are still remembered with love and reverence by some of the older members of the community.

The third prioress was Mother Helen Whelan. She and her cousin, Sister Rose Tennyly, entered the community together and made their profession on



1. Mother Rose Tennelly  
 2. Mother Columba Walsh  
 3. Mother Helen Whelan  
 4. Mother Angela Lynch  
 5. Mother Regina O'Meara  
 6. Mother Mary Benven Rumpf

7. Mother Vincent Ferrer Thompson  
 8. Mother Bernardine Bushue  
 9. Mother Agnes Hunt  
 10. Mother Mary Aquin Holleran  
 11. Mother Francesca Kearney  
 12. Mother Magdalen Norton



the same day, August 4, 1827. Twice they alternated as prioress of Saint Catharine. Mother Helen served in that capacity from 1832 to 1835, from 1838 to 1841, and again from 1853 to 1856. She had the happy faculty of winning hearts and filling them with holy joy. Like her predecessors, she labored to increase the spiritual forces of the society. Steadfastly she worked, watched and prayed, and heaven did not fail the heart whose faith ever soared upward. It was during her first term of office that cholera became epidemic in Washington County. Throughout this dire visitation, Mother Helen's burdens were heavy and her anxiety for the safety of the sisters, who were nobly giving their services and imperiling their lives for their suffering neighbors, was great; but she recognized the opportunity such an ordeal gave for testing their fortitude and courage, and she always sustained them by her example, exhorting them to meet the situation with the heroism it demanded. Mother Helen's energy and courage exercised a quickening influence over the community. From a modest little school she raised the academy to a plane of high educational efficiency, so that it was chartered during her second term of office. She devoted herself particularly to the training of the sisters, and in this, as in other respects, the standards she set up were beyond the power of the society to realize during her time, but were handed down and reached by the generations that came after her.

Mother Rose Tennelly, the fourth prioress, entered the Order early in the year 1824, and lived to

see the log structure, set in the twisted valley, replaced by stately, well equipped buidings; and she gave the last years of her life to the Lord as unsparingly as she had given its earliest. The novice, making the rounds of the dormitory, her "Benedicamus Domino" waking the nuns to another day of prayer and loving service, was wont to find Sister Rose on her knees, supplicating God to bless the community and increase the fervor of its members. The novices were very near to the heart of the aged religious. Every Sunday evening brought her to the novitiate door, with a little treat for them. An exemplary religious, her one thought was to be of service to others, by giving strength to the weak, knowledge to the uninstructed, hope to the discouraged, and love to all. The greater part of her last years was spent in the Holy Presence. After giving sixty years of faithful labor to the Order, she found peace and rest in the Lord, on February 20, 1886.

Mother Angela Sansbury, Mother Magdalen Edden, Mother Helen Whelan and Mother Rose Tennelly were, undoubtedly, the guiding spirits of the community during those early decades; but they, in turn, were assisted and sustained by the loyal and devoted sisters in the ranks. Its success was due, in no small measure, to the ardor, vigor and patience of those sturdy, simple souls, who were the woof of the fabric of the pioneer days. Prominent among these was Sister Margaret Carrico, one of the founders. Always pious and exact in the observance of the Rule, she was a constant source of edification to her sisters.



Her life was as simple and holy as it was hidden in God. Though of a delicate constitution, she was never heard to complain, and when the time of her death drew near, her patience and resignation seemed to increase. She passed to her reward June 7, 1831. Another member whose memory is held in loving veneration, is Sister Teresa Caho. She was endowed with a clear intellect and was a member of the council for many years. Sister Teresa was also an excellent teacher, and was employed in the schools for a long period. She possessed the gift of enforcing discipline among her pupils, yet holding their confidence and affection. Sister Teresa died January 6, 1868. On the morning of her death, she was very thirsty from fever, but desiring first to receive Holy Communion, she would not break her fast. The infirmarian finally induced her to take some water, and in complying, Sister Teresa said: "Obedience is better than sacrifice." They were her last words. Truly could it be said of her that she was obedient unto death.

The name "Sansbury" is deeply entwined in the early history of Saint Mary Magdalen Convent. Alexis Sansbury, with his wife, Elizabeth Hamilton Sansbury, emigrated from Maryland to Kentucky in the early part of the nineteenth century. They were devoted Catholics and true supporters of religion and education in Kentucky, giving liberally of their means to build up the churches and convents in Washington County. Their most valuable contribution to the cause of religion, however, was their

two daughters, Mother Angela and Sister Benven. Of Mother Angela we have already spoken, and the early records state that Sister Benven was likewise a devout member, living and laboring for God. She was one of the colony sent to make the foundation of Saint Mary, at Somerset, Ohio, in 1830. Sisters Catharine and Francis Sansbury, like their cousins, were brought up in the atmosphere of a good Catholic home, and early manifested a desire to become religious. Though of delicate constitution, both these sisters gave faithful and devoted service to the community. Sister Francis died on Christmas Day, 1825, and Sister Catharine passed to her reward on August 14, 1828, the eve of the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady, for whom she had manifested a tender devotion. Another venerated name in the annals of the Order, is that of Sister Ann Hill, who spent the last years of her religious life at Saint Mary, Somerset, Ohio. An aged sister of the community wrote concerning her: "Sister Ann was a highly gifted woman and well educated. She lived as a zealous and faithful religious until her death on April 1, 1840." Sister Ann was the daughter of Clement and Mary Hamilton Hill, and the granddaughter of Thomas Hill, who, with Henry Cambron, made the first Catholic settlement on Cartwright Creek. Seventeen children blessed the union of Clement and Mary Hill. Two of these consecrated their lives to God; Ann, one of the founders of the Dominican Sisters, and Walter Henry, the distinguished Jesuit writer and educator.

Still another name interwoven in the history of the Order is that of Montgomery. The Reverends Samuel L., Stephen H., and Charles P. Montgomery were devoted missionaries in Kentucky and Ohio, who labored with indefatigable zeal to relieve the spiritual needs of the Catholics of those states. Success crowned their efforts. Sister Osanna Montgomery received the white habit of the Order on the feast of Saint Rose, 1823. She was a woman of unusual talent and was consequently an able teacher. It is recorded in the Book of Professions that Sister Osanna was called by Almighty God to the religious life and it was predicted that she would become an ornament to the community, a mirror of piety to each member and a treasure of usefulness to the convent. Death claimed this beautiful soul in the midst of her usefulness on March 1, 1839. Another member of this family was Sister Vallina Montgomery. This good religious was much beloved and gave generously of all that she possessed to her community. Her charm and dignity made her a valuable guide in training children in the school, and her promptness and piety impressed all who came within the sphere of her influence.

Sister Dominica Caho, a sister of Sister Teresa Caho, made her profession with Sister Vallina Montgomery and Sister Columba Walsh, May 20, 1830. The Catholic Advocate, of June 9, 1849, recording her death says:

Died of pneumonia, on May 18, at Saint Magdalen Convent, Sister Dominica Caho, one of the early religious of Saint Dominic

in this country. Her life in that illustrious society has been most edifying, and to all those who have known her, her death is the cause of bitter grief. They feel that one has been taken from their midst, who possessed their esteem, their profound veneration and their most sincere attachment; one whose presence, words and actions were to them a living book full of useful instruction. It may be said that she was a true model of all the virtues of the religious state, which she embraced spontaneously and with pure zeal for the sanctification of her own soul and for the glory of God. She was animated habitually by a lively faith and a profound spirit of religion; and an ardent piety and fervent devotion characterized her whole conduct. But there were two virtues that shone in her more brilliantly than the others and appeared to constitute, in a more particular manner, her distinctive character; these were humility and charity. She seemed to have chosen for the chief subject of her religious studies and meditations these fundamental instructions of her Divine Redeemer: "Learn of Me because I am meek and humble of heart." "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you love one another." Therefore, may we hope she died the death of the just.

Sister Columba Walsh was born in County Wexford, Ireland, and through her long and useful life was a prominent member of the society. She brought all the energy and fidelity of her Irish character to the work of the Order. As procuratrix, she kept a watchful eye on everything connected with the farm and domestic requirements. As prioress from January 6, 1844 to 1847, and from January 6, 1865, to 1868, she was most zealous for religious observance and the advancement of the school in every department. She seemed to realize in her early religious life that it is not wealth, nor power, nor fame nor human love which brings deep and abiding happiness to the soul; but that the renouncing of these things gives a blessed tranquility and peace, the nearest approach to real happiness in this life.

Father Lăcordaire's description of a "wise person" applies admirably to this good sister. "She lives within herself," says the great Dominican preacher. "She tries to do what good she can, and attaches herself to that corner of the world where her lot is cast." This was true of Sister Columba. She gave herself to one little corner of Kentucky, with small concern for what was going on elsewhere, and devoted herself heart and soul to her duties in the community. She died May 4, 1869.

Sister Joanna Simpson made her profession on Christmas Day, 1833. For this reason, she laughingly called herself the community's Christmas gift. She lives in the memory of a number of the present generation, for the gayety of her disposition, the wit of her conversation, and her readiness to use those gifts for the enjoyment of others. Still are recounted incidents of her cheerfulness scattering trouble, her humor turning the seemingly tragic into the ridiculous. On one occasion the gate was left open and the stock took possession of the lawn, doing great damage to some choice shrubs and flowers, which Father Cubero, the chaplain, had planted and tended with great care. When the trouble was discovered, he summoned the sisters to the community room, by ringing the big bell, and appeared before them in his sternest mood. He enjoined profound silence on the sisters for twenty-four hours. Sister Joanna, with her joyous ways, was a favorite of Father Cubero, so now she took her comb, and covering it with tissue paper, stationed herself under the window of his sit-

ting room and began to play all the hymns she knew. He knocked on the window but she paid no attention to him. Then he opened it and began to scold her, but the music continued without pause. Finally, when he saw that she was not to be stopped, he told her that the sisters were released from the penance, but that she must keep profound silence. Quite content, she hastened to Mother Regina's room with the good news. Many another story of cleverness in soothing the ruffled spirits of the old Spanish chaplain is told to this day of laughter-loving Sister Joanna Simpson.

Sister Emily Thorpe was professed August 15, 1835. She spent some years at Saint Mary, Somerset, Ohio, and was one of the sisters sent to Memphis, Tennessee, to assist in the foundation of Saint Agnes Academy. The last decade of her life was passed at Saint Catharine, where she continued to serve the community for a number of years until she lost her sight; even then her sunny disposition edified and brought cheer to those with whom she was associated.

Sister Mary Clements and Sister Imelda Montgomery were noted musicians. They were gifted with beautiful voices and delighted to sing the hymns and canticles so dear to every child of Saint Dominic. People from the surrounding country often came to Saint Catharine to listen to the sisters chant the office of the Blessed Virgin according to the Dominican rite. Both Sister Mary and Sister Imelda were much beloved and rendered great service to the com-



GROUP OF EARLY MEMBERS





munity. Another member who belonged to this period and who lived until December 3, 1876, was Sister Margaret Queen. She frequently declared that she considered it the highest privilege to live under the same roof with our Divine Lord, to receive Him frequently, and to serve Him all the day long. The greater part of her declining years was spent in meditation in the sisters' choir. When the last call came, it found her waiting for the Bridegroom.

Still another of Saint Catharine's venerated names is that of Sister Angela Lynch, who entered the novitiate in the spring of 1835. Her entrance into the Order is an interesting story. Two elder sisters had joined the community at Saint Mary, Somerset, and she frequently visited them. When she expressed a desire to follow their example and consecrate her life to God, her parents did not approve of it, as they considered her too young; even the provincial of the Order did not encourage her, thinking she might be actuated by a desire to be with her sisters. At last, in order to test her sincerity, she was permitted to go to Saint Mary Magdalen for a visit. She assented to the plan and then entreated with so much earnestness to be allowed to remain, that her parents finally gave their consent. It is not surprising that Sister Angela made great progress in the spiritual life, for her pious parents had so imbued her mind with religious principles that all its aspirations turned heavenward. She made her profession on Rosary Sunday, October 2, 1836, and with great earnestness applied herself to any duty that might aid in advanc-

ing the interest of the community. She served it as directress of studies at Saint Catharine, as counsellor and later as prioress, and under her wise government it grew and prospered.

On her eighty-second birthday, September 8, 1898, the Rev. E. P. DeCantillon, O. P., was a guest at Saint Catharine. In an article written by him and printed in the *Courier-Journal* of September 17, 1898, he thus speaks of the venerable nun;

Sister Angela is still perfectly erect and her eyes are bright with intelligence and spirituality. She has been a member of the Order of Saint Dominic for sixty-three years, yet her faculties are perfectly active and she is still one of the mainstays of the community. To her clear judgment and business acumen, the present prosperous condition of the school is ascribed. She delighted to walk around the ample buildings and never tires telling their history. From her were elicited the following statements:

"I traveled all the way from Somerset to Kentucky in a stage over the dirt road. In a woody country the stage broke down and we had to seek refuge in the nearest station until the coach could be repaired. Father Badin traveled with me, and on the second day of our journey, we were joined by Father Montgomery. Both came all the way to Kentucky, taking the route by Maysville and Lexington. Just think, that was sixty-three years ago! I took my dinner at the hotel in Springfield, then came out to the convent. There were many struggles and privations in those days. When I came, this was the Sansbury farm. There were one hundred and seventy acres in the farm. The original farm-house faced the west and was occupied by the colored people as already the middle building, or community house, had been erected; and the first little chapel was then used for a store-house. There were no picket fences, only worm or rail fences. The front avenue was a grove of locust trees and the place was almost a dense woodland. The patrons of the school paid most of the tuition in wool and flax. The sisters spun and wove this into wearing apparel. I have seen all the lower terrace of these grounds growing in flax."

Sister Angela was an artist of no ordinary ability, and she spent her hours of leisure in the studio. It has been said of her that her virtuous and meritorious life was like her paintings; the picture could not have been painted, had not the canvas taken and retained the colors. So it is with the soul, the graces that adorn it are so many touches of God's hand. The strength and usefulness of Saint Catharine Congregation to-day are largely due to the love, energy and patience of these pioneer members, and of many others unnamed, since the recording Angel is the only one who has kept a record of their deeds.



## CHAPTER IX

### War Time

When Mother Magdalen Edelen, the prioress succeeding Mother Josepha White, whom ill health had obliged to resign from that office, assumed the government of the community in June, 1859, she was not unaware that perilous times were confronting the nation, and that a conflict which would wreck and ruin, was threatening.

For long years before the first gun was fired, war had seethed in the hearts of men, passion had blinded the nation's representatives in Congress, and it only waited for some individual act to send the North and South at each other's throats, as in our own time an assassin's bullet precipitated the World War.

Against this unnatural position, Kentucky reasoned, pleaded; but her voice was drowned in the storm which hate and jealousy had aroused. The verdict of time vindicates the attitude of Kentucky. A peaceful solution of the question of slavery was not only possible, but was on the way, for nothing can stand out against the awakened conscience of a people. The trend of humanity is toward freedom and it can no more be stopped than the stars in their course. It took no fratricidal war to break the chains of slavery in Brazil. They fell from the limbs of the

slaves of their own accord before the enlarged mind of their masters.

This evolution of the idea of human rights was coming to the South as the manumission of many slaves certify, but she would not be coerced. Thus one of the saddest wars in the annals of time was begun, for it was brother who fought against brother, and its effects seem everlasting; for, though the descendants of those conflicting armies have twice fought side by side beneath one flag, still North is North and South is South, while between them gapes the dividing gulf.

When Kentucky's neutrality was brushed aside, her beautiful land became the highway for the contending armies. While honor held her to the Union, love and tradition bound her to the Confederacy, and this internal division added to the affliction brought by the war, which she had tried from the days of Henry Clay, the Great Pacificator, to avert. The North questioned her loyalty, the South her sincerity, and both regarded her as legitimate prey. With friends and neighbors, yea, even families divided, hers was a conflict within a conflict, and her heart was stricken by a two-edged sword. Her rich plantations were devastated, her homes plundered and destroyed, her people driven across her northern and southern boundary, as the tide of victory flowed.

Washington County experienced its share of war's sorrows and ravages. At Perryville, a short distance from Springfield, one of the bloodiest bat-

tles of the war was fought. Lying on the line of march for either forces, Saint Catharine Convent might have had ample cause for fear. We, who in our own day and on our own Continent as well as in Europe, have beheld the infamous treatment religious communities especially of women, have received from soldiers in time of war, may well be proud of the fact that never were American arms disgraced by such actions. Grim necessity may have caused officers and men to appropriate provisions and stock belonging to sisters; but no harm was offered those women. And when, as happened at Saint Agnes Convent, Memphis, some individuals gave affront, they were promptly reprimanded and assurance given the sisters that the North was making no war on women.

Well the Sisters of Saint Catharine realized that they were as safe with an army encamped around them as when alone, since that army was made up of their countrymen, and, though their hearts were bowed by grief, they were untouched by fear as the armies of the Blue and the Gray thundered past their convent, or stopped, if necessity demanded.

One of those who stopped was General Sherman on his march through Kentucky. It is related that while the sisters were preparing refreshments for him and his staff, he tried to win over a little southern girl, but she would have none of his kind words and caresses. Morgan's men passed the very door of Saint Catharine in rapid movement and again in hot retreat. While encamped near Springfield,

Morgan sent out his men to secure some horses. Accordingly, one Sim Slaughter from Danville and another trooper came to St. Catharine to exchange their worn-out animals for the two valuable horses belonging to the sisters. While Sisters Columba Walsh and Rose Tennelly were pleading with the men not to take the horses, Sister Ann, one of the prefects, came along with some of the students. Among them were three sisters named Adams, from Danville. Slaughter was a friend of the Adams family and seeing the girls, sprang from his horse to greet them. To his surprise and amazement, they held their hands behind them. Then Rebecca Adams said:

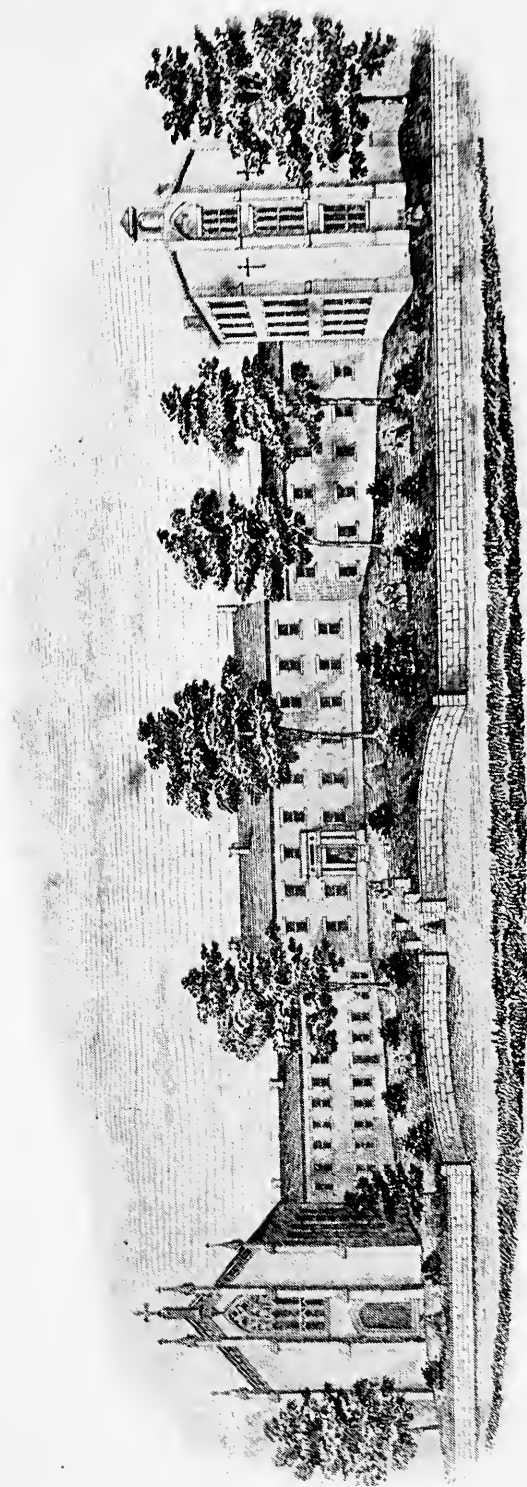
“Sim Slaughter, we will never have anything to do with you again unless you put the sisters’ horses back in the stable and take your own old nags. I should think you would have more manhood, even if it is war time. You know all these children are depending on the sisters. I am ashamed to acknowledge that you are from Danville!”

“I am under orders from my commander to get horses,” said the soldier, sorrowfully. “But I’ll put them back, if you will tell me some news from home.”

Rebecca expressed her willingness and the girls talked with their friend for some time. The sisters invited the soldiers to have supper, and the horses were saved.

At another time late in the evening, Union soldiers surrounded the convent and an officer demanded the right to search the house and premises for Confederate soldiers who were said to be concealed in that part of the country. The superior





ST. CATHARINE IN 1870



showed no reluctance toward his going through the convent as she knew that the poor soldier, whose wounds the infirmarian had dressed and to whom she had given food, had fled to a thicket nearby at the news of the approach of the enemy's troops.

The half-famished Texas Rangers brought meal, flour and other provisions and respectfully asked permission to use the academy kitchen for the preparation of one good meal. The permission was freely given. Before the battle of Perryville, October 8, 1862, General Bragg with his troops first, and General Buell afterwards, camped along the creek in front of Saint Catharine, the officers using the guest house as their headquarters. The sisters went to the battlefield of Perryville under the protection of some of Bragg's troops and ministered to the wounded and dying. At midnight, on the day of the battle, wagon loads of soldiers were brought to Saint Catharine to be nursed and cared for. The sisters gave up their own beds and did all they could to assuage the suffering of the men. Many of them died, soothed and comforted by the prayers of the devoted sisters, and their remains were taken to Lebanon, Kentucky, for burial. With impartial charity, the sisters rendered what aid they could during the long bloody years, continuing their work of teaching in the meanwhile, uninterruptedly.

During the early part of the war, the Sisters of Saint Agnes Convent, Memphis, were annoyed by soldiers trespassing on their grounds and helping themselves to what the garden afforded. Matters finally reached a crisis when a company, headed by

a drunken captain, demanded entrance into the convent. Fortunately, friends of the sisters were on the premises and came to the rescue. They explained that neither soldiers nor arms were secreted there and succeeded in sending the intruders away. General Vitch was informed of the event, and an investigation showed that the action of the captain was unauthorized. A guard of respectable, well-behaved soldiers was sent to protect Saint Agnes, as long as it was deemed needful. Excepting this period of anxiety, the sisters of Saint Agnes community suffered comparatively little during the war. Providence aided them in their hour of need, and if their labors were more arduous in those days of strife, compensation in various forms came to them. In a quiet way the sisters continued their work of teaching.

At the request of Rt. Rev. Bishop Whelan, O. P., of Nashville, sisters from Saint Agnes took charge of the city hospital, which had been consigned to the use of sick and wounded soldiers. Mother Ann Simpson sent Sister Magdalen Clarke, Sister Francis Conlan and Sister Alberta Rumpf to nurse the Confederate soldiers who so sadly needed aid. Among those brought to the hospital was Sister Alberta's own brother. Even before the hospital was ready, the sick and wounded were admitted. Saint Agnes Convent prepared everything for the soldiers until the physicians could get the city to provide the hospital with what was needful.

As time went on and the number of patients increased, a hotel was converted into another hospital

and again the sisters were appealed to for nurses. Sister Josephine Whelan, Sister M. Bernard Madigan and Sister Regina Ray answered the call. Many of the soldiers had never seen a sister before coming to the hospital, and some had known but few Catholics, yet numbers requested baptism in their dying hours, having learned to love and reverence the faith that inspired such charity as was exemplified by their devoted nurses.

Before the war, whenever the sisters went traveling, they took off the religious habit and wore secular clothing. Even when they went to Springfield they rode in a closed carriage so that they might not attract notice. Their departure from that custom followed a memorable occasion during the war. Two of the Saint Catharine community, Sister Angela Lynch and Sister Columba Walsh went to Frankfort to secure a safeguard for the property of the sisters. When their business was satisfactorily settled, they traveled on to Lexington to make some necessary purchases. The unusual style of their garb attracted attention and they were arrested as spies and detained in custody for examination. The news spread rapidly and it was fortunate that the sisters had friends in the vicinity to identify them. Among those who came to their rescue were the McGarvey, Sheehan, Watson and Morgan families.

The McGarvey and Sheehan families have long been numbered among the benefactors of Saint Catharine community and are closely connected with the Order of Saint Dominic. Rev. Father Mc-

Garvey, O. P., and Miss Mary McGarvey, who died of spotted fever at Saint Catharine, Rev. Martin Sheehan, O. P., of Saint Vincent Ferrer Church, New York City, and Sister M. Bertrand Sheehan, a prominent member of Saint Catharine Congregation and at present superior of the Immaculate Conception Normal School at Hastings, Nebraska, are members of these families.

As soon as the Watson family heard that the sisters had been arrested, they sent a messenger to the house in Lexington where they were detained to insist upon their being set free. Miss Anna Watson, now Mrs. N. T. Dickerson, of Nicholasville, Kentucky, belongs to this family. She was a student of Saint Catharine from 1866 to 1869, and has ever since been a most devoted friend. Mrs. Dickerson's two granddaughters, the Misses Lucille and Phyllis Rarick, were graduated from the Commercial Course of Saint Catharine, June 10, 1919, the fiftieth anniversary of their grandmother's departure from the same school. The Morgan family, who also protested against the arrest of the sisters, have been friends of Saint Catharine for several generations. Misses Ruth and Phoebe Morgan were graduated from Saint Catharine in June, 1867. Miss Ruth Morgan, now Mrs. Jack Chinn of Harrodsburg, Kentucky, is a loved and active member of the Alumnae, and four of her greatnieces, Misses May and Martha Tewmey, Lucretia Morgan and Catharine Haggan, were students at Saint Catharine during the years of 1918, 1919, 1920 and 1921.

During these troubled times Sister Imelda Montgomery was elected prioress, January 6, 1863, but on account of ill health, she was soon obliged to resign. Sister Columba Walsh was appointed to fill her unexpired term and was later elected prioress, from 1865 to 1868. Mother Columba's life was as unpretentious as it was holy, and those members of the society still living, who were associated with her, tenderly cherish her memory. Her great heart had room for all, and none came into her presence without feeling the influence of her kindness and charity.

The sad struggle between the North and the South was over and President Abraham Lincoln was dead. All of our readers are more or less familiar with the circumstances of Lincoln's assassination and his last long journey to Springfield, Illinois, but few know the circumstances of the unveiling of the monument at his tomb. For nearly ten years the National Lincoln Monument Association sought to erect a suitable monument at his grave. Finally the work was completed and the funeral line was formed again and proceeded from Washington, D. C., to Springfield, Illinois.

On the morning of October 15, 1874, all was in readiness for the unveiling of the monument. Two magnificent star spangled banners, suspended by silken cords drooped gracefully in front of the monument. President U. S. Grant had requested that the honor of unveiling the monument be conferred on two members of some religious sisterhood as a

token of gratitude for their faithful and self-sacrificing services during the Civil War. At the last moment the Committee on Arrangements announced that the sisterhood in the immediate vicinity was cloistered and had declined the honor of unveiling the monument. There was real consternation manifested at this announcement, but General Sherman, as in the war, was equal to this occasion. His memory went back to the days of campaign in Kentucky and to the appalling scenes in Memphis where the sisters of Saint Dominic had ministered to the wounded and dying soldiers of his command and he exclaimed, "If I had my sisters of Saint Dominic near they would not disappoint me."

Rev. P. J. Mackin stepped forward and said, "Why I have sisters of Saint Dominic from Kentucky teaching in my school but they are in Jacksonville. I am sure they would come with the permission of the Right Rev. Bishop Baltes."

"Where is the Bishop?" asked President Grant. "We'll get the permission. Sherman, order a special train while I wire the Bishop." In a very short time President Grant received a telegram authorizing Sister Josephine Meagher, the superioress of Saint Saviour School, Jacksonville, Illinois, to take a companion and depart at once for Springfield, Illinois, where, in compliance with the president's request they should unveil the statue at the tomb of Lincoln. Rev. P. M. Burke acted as an ecclesiastical escort on the thirty-five mile journey to the capital.



In the procession which preceded the ceremonies, the president with the attendant generals dressed in full regalia, occupied the first carriage, while the second bore the unveilers whose humble though peerless black and white garb formed a marked contrast to those about them. The ceremonies lasted several hours; finally the oration of Senator Oglesby of Illinois was finished and the immense gathering waited in silence. The appointed signal was given to the unveilers and the banners parted revealing the statue of Lincoln. In the applause that followed, the sisters slipped away and were taken back to Jacksonville.\*

In 1864, the sisters of Saint Agnes Academy, Memphis, decided to open a school for day pupils exclusively, and a house on Adams Avenue was secured. Owing to its growing patronage a larger building was purchased the following year on Third Street, between Washington and Poplar, to which the day school was transferred. It was dedicated to Our Lady of LaSalette, and Sister Ann Hanlon was its first superior. Previous to the war, the sisters had taken charge of Saint Peter parochial school. Among its first teachers were Sister Catharine Cain, Sister Bernard Madagan and Sister Josephine Whelan. At first, the sisters labored without remuneration, but later received some compensation for their services.

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\*Chicago, Illinois, Daily Tribune, October 15-16, 1874.

A few years later, April 19, 1869, Saint Agnes community purchased property in Jackson, Tennessee, where a day and boarding school was opened under the patronage of the Immaculate Conception. Sister Vincentia Fitzpatrick, Sister Mary Pius Fitzpatrick, Sister Dominica Fitzpatrick and Sister Josephine Whelan were the pioneers of this foundation, which proved a successful undertaking until 1873, when it was destroyed by fire.

Sister Vincentia was one of the founders of St. Agnes Academy, and for nearly eighteen consecutive years filled the office of prefect of the school, a position for which she was eminently qualified. In the annals of Saint Agnes Academy, it is recorded that a kinder, more self-sacrificing woman than Sister Vincentia would be difficult to find. The welfare of the children was her uppermost thought, and they responded to her devotedness. She possessed their unbounded confidence and with rare tact in one so young, she succeeded in her efforts for their advancement, with surprising results. Her new field in Jackson found her equally faithful to duty. In 1871, she left Jackson for Pensacola, Florida, whence she returned to Saint Agnes, where she died August 11, 1893.

While the school was still in Jackson, a little boy entered it who was destined to become renowned as judge and sociologist. Sister Mary Pius was his teacher and to her in after years, Judge Ben B. Lindsey of Denver, wrote the following letter:

Denver, Colorado.

Ben. B. Lindsey, Judge.

May 26, 1920.

Sister M. Pius,  
St. Catherine Convent,  
Washington County, Kentucky.

My dear Sister M. Pius:-

I just want to take this occasion to write and tell you what a source of consolation and happiness you have been to my mother in these days of her darkness and sorrow. But she is with all very cheerful and is making the best of everything with a wonderful Christian fortitude with which, I am sure, your fine influence and religious life have much to do.

I remember you very well as a little boy going to the school that you presided over in Jackson, Tennessee, and from those days to the present time, I have never forgotten you and your kindly smile to the boys in the school, and the fine influence that came to us through your work, and for which to this day, I am your debtor.

I am so glad to know that you keep your health and strength and that your good work goes on. I think that the good Lord has blessed you with so many years in this world, that so much needs an influence like yours.

I have now been in the work here for the children for over twenty years, and we have succeeded in making a great many changes, abolishing jails for children and having courts with a kindly but firm influence to help them rather than hurt them; and we find that it works and has been a great success.

I have also in this time been to every State in the Union and before the Legislatures of most of them, pleading for changes in the old harsh and criminal laws, and the establishing of the system we have helped to promote throughout the world for the better care of the helpless child. It has been a great work, full of interest and inspiration, and I have been more than thankful that I have been privileged to take part in it, and I hope you will let me subscribe myself as one of your boys, whose earliest recollection of school days is in your school in Jackson, Tennessee. I am sure that whatever good we do in the world is, in part, due to just such good influence as we had from you during those formative days of life when first impressions are most ef-

fective and lasting, and when the best work is done for men while they are children.

I wish you could meet my wife. She is, of course, a perfectly wonderful woman and is a great help to me. She joins me and my mother in love and good wishes, and the hope that you will be spared yet many years of usefulness in a world in which you have done so much.

Sincerely,

Ben B. Lindsey.

In his long and varied dealing with children, Judge Lindsey keenly realized what it means to have them surrounded by good influence in their earliest days. His tribute to the training pupils receive in Catholic schools is born of his knowledge of the misery and suffering which lack of it has brought to many a boy and girl.

## CHAPTER X

### Change Of Government

From the foundation of the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Dominic of Saint Catharine of Sienna, on April 7, 1822, until the opening of 1865, they were under the direct jurisdiction of the Master General of the Dominicans and subject to the provincial of Saint Joseph Province. The sisters could be transferred from one house to another as the provincial deemed wise for the needs of religion, yet each house had its own novitiate.

Early in the spring of 1865, the Most Rev. A. V. Jandel, the Master General, felt himself constrained to withdraw his jurisdiction over the Dominican Sisters. It had been granted merely in view of certain exigencies existing in the United States, and these no longer demanded such concessions. The pleading of the sisters against the severing of the tie that had bound them most intimately to the Dominican Order drew from the Master General the following paternal letter:

To the Prioress of Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent.  
Dear Sister in Christ:-

I have received the united letter of the good sisters, and I am very much edified by your good and pious dispositions, and pained at the thought of being obliged to refuse your desire, so ardently expressed, but in truth I have no option in the matter of your jurisdiction, but to obey the laws like yourselves. I could not assume such jurisdiction without usurping the rights of

others, and violating the laws of the Church. You will perceive, therefore, if I refuse your request, it is simply because I have no power whatever to grant the request. Our sisters in France were equally desirous and ardent to be under the jurisdiction of the Order, and yet, we could not grant their request, but only give them the benefit of counsel, guidance, retreats, etc., which the Provincial and Brethren of America will be equally happy to give to you at all times.

Even the nuns of the Second Order are not under our jurisdiction. Meantime, rest assured you will be always happy in serving the Lord under the Superior whom the Holy Church appoints, and your happiness will always be one of the great objects of our care and prayers.

As to the books of the Constitution, although I encouraged and praised their zeal and spirit, yet I did not thereby intend to approve them. On the contrary, I think I said if they were to be printed again there were some things which would require revision and correction.

You will be pleased to send a copy of this letter to the superiors of the different houses, who signed the letter sent by the sisters to me.

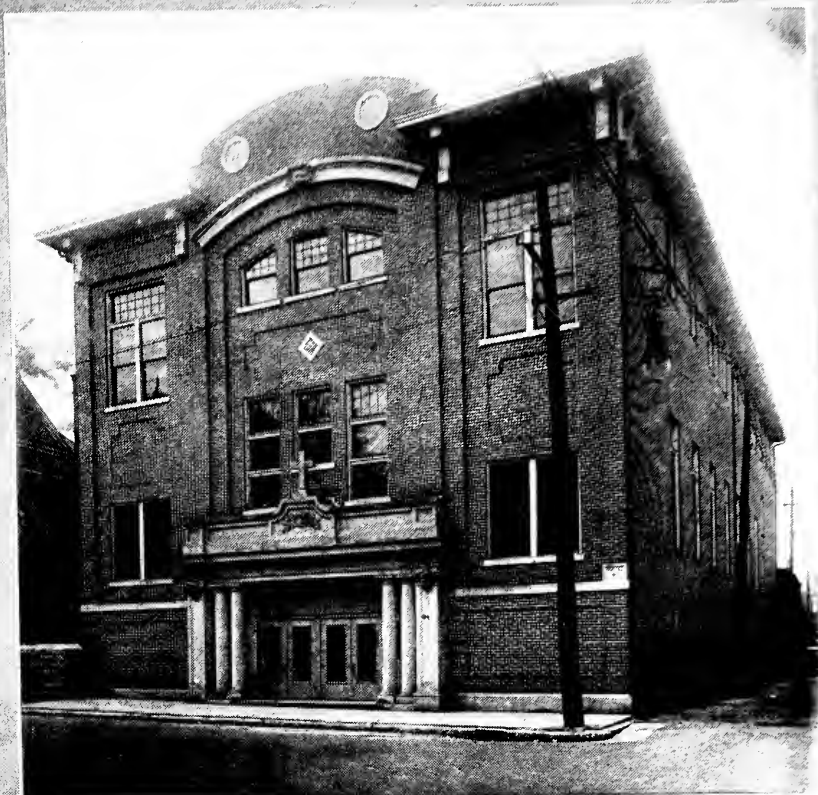
Recommending myself and companions to your good prayers, I bless you in the Lord and remain, my dear sisters in Christ,

Brother V. Jandel.\*

The Right Rev. P. J. Lavialle, third bishop of Louisville, appointed the provincial, the Very Rev. William O'Carroll, O. P., ecclesiastical superior of Saint Catharine of Sienna Community. The sisters now realized that the Constitution which their saintly founder, Father Wilson, had taken from the Constitution of the Second Order with modifications to suit the conditions of the times and the country, was incomplete and inadequate to meet the changed situation; therefore, they thought it wise to have the charter amended to empower the corporation to establish branch houses. This was done

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\*Archives of Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent.



HOLY ROSARY ACADEMY, LOUISVILLE, KY., 1922





January 26, 1870. In the meantime, the sisters had petitioned Rome for recognition, but little thought that more than half a century would pass before their long cherished wish would be realized.

In earlier times, the educational work of the sisterhoods was chiefly in their own academies, but as the Catholic population increased, parish schools were opened and a new field of endeavor called to the teaching Orders. In 1866, at the request of Bishop Lavialle, the Dominican Fathers of Saint Louis Bertrand Church, Louisville, appealed to the ecclesiastical superior of Saint Catharine, the Very Rev. Father O'Carroll, for a colony of sisters to undertake the work. In response, Mother Columba Walsh sent Sister Angela Lynch and Sister Sybillina Sheridan to Louisville to open the parochial school and superintend the building of the new Holy Rosary Academy, which the sisters proposed to erect and for which a site opposite Saint Louis Bertrand Church had been purchased.

The sisters began classes in September, 1866, in an old barrack on Seventh Street. Later a cottage was purchased and moved to the grounds which enabled them to open a third room. Sister Ann O'Brien came in December of the same year to aid them. The building was in poor condition, the furnishing rough and meagre, while the pupils ranged in ages from six to eighteen years. It was a difficult task to grade the children as many of the older ones had had no opportunity of attending school regularly, but glad at last that it had come,

they grasped it and made good use of their time. Some of Louisville's leading business and professional men were among the first pupils of the old barrack school.

In 1869, on account of the increased attendance and the limited number of sisters available, the Xaverian Brothers took over the boys' school. This arrangement was maintained for five years when the sisters were recalled. The barrack, with some improvements, served as a school until 1892 when the priests' old home was remodeled and converted into the present school.

The new academy was placed under the protection of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary. It was a comfortable structure, facing on Garvin Place and was ready for occupancy the first Monday in March, 1867. The Louisville community was increased that year by the coming of Sister Raymunda Meagher, Sister Philomena Sheridan and Sister M. Aquin Montgomery. Sister Ann O'Brien, the last of the original Louisville band, died March 21, 1920.

Holy Rosary Academy repeated the story of hardships attending all worthy undertakings. While well patronized, it could not meet its obligations immediately, so the creditors foreclosed the mortgage and requested the sisters to give up possession as soon as possible. This sudden and unexpected reverse of fortune pressed heavily upon the struggling community and cast a gloom upon their spirits. But success never yet was won by the craven-hearted, and after the first pain of loss was over, the sisters

gallantly shouldered their burden and continued on their way.

Mother Mary Benven, who had succeeded Mother Columba Walsh as prioress in 1868, purchased the residence of Captain Pennington at Eighth and Kentucky Streets. The situation was not what the community desired, but it was the best available and thither the academy was transferred. Their financial trials, however, did not cease with their removal to their new home, and during the year 1879, two sisters were constantly soliciting aid from friends of religion and education in various places. By the money thus obtained, the mortgage was reduced to a figure that could be cared for by the income from the school. In the course of a few years, Holy Rosary Academy had been firmly established in the city and had begun to enjoy a large patronage. True to Dominican traditions, its faculty was well-qualified to meet the conditions of their day and impart an education based on sound Christian principles. Among the sisters who taught in Saint Louis Bertrand school and Holy Rosary Academy during the early years, were Sister Thomasina Simpson, Sister Aloysia Sheridan, Sister Josephine Meagher, Sister Louise Hayden, Sister Vincentia Maguire, Sister M. Thomas Wight, Sister M. Catharine Young, Sister Cecilia Cary, Sister Antoninus Nealy, Sister M. Bertrand Sheehan and Sister M. Raymund Bird. Special mention should be made of the financial assistance given to the sisters at this time by Mr. J. Luke Deppen whose name is held in

loving memory by the older sisters. He is the grandfather of Sister M. Ambrose Deppen, at present the head of the music department at Spalding Academy, Spalding, Nebraska, Sister M. Sadoc Deppen, who died July 28, 1892, and Mrs. Sarah Deppen Kelly of St. Louis, Missouri.

At the election of January 6, 1868, Sister Mary Benven Rumpf was called to the office of prioress of Saint Catharine Congregation. Mother Benven was born in Washington City, February 11, 1833. She attended the Visitation Academy there and shortly after her graduation entered the Convent of Saint Catharine of Sienna and was a devoted member of the society for more than sixty years. She was ever prominent in its affairs and much of its progress was due to her prudence and foresight.

During Mother Benven's administration the time and form of profession were changed. Until this time, the sisters had made first vows for life. Now Pope Pius IX decreed that they should make a temporary profession following their year of novitiate, and then after a faithful discharge of the religious life for five years, take perpetual vows. In compliance with the decree, Sister M. Joseph Clark, Sister Vincentia Maguire and Sister M. Thomas Wight made their simple profession for five years on June 21, 1868. The form of profession in use until this time was as follows:

Jesus, Mary and Dominic.

I, Sister . . ., born in lawful wedlock, novice of the convent of Saint Catharine of Sienna, Third Order of Saint Dominic,

do hereby declare that I entered the said religious order through no compulsion or persuasion, but of my own free choice, and as I hope, through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and I thus desire to persevere and to make my religious profession therein.

Whereas, for want of proper enclosure, I cannot make solemn vows, but only simple ones, my wish and intentions are, as soon as proper enclosure can be procured, to join in petitioning His Holiness to allow us to make solemn vows as the nuns of the Second Order of Saint Dominic and the religious men of the Order usually make.

I, Sister . . . , make my religious profession and promise obedience to God, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, to St. Dominic, our holy Founder, and to you, Mother . . . , Prioress of Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent, as holding the place of the Most Rev. Father . . . , Master General of the Order of Preaching Friars. According to the Rule of Saint Augustine and the Constitution of the said Order. I promise obedience to you and to my other prioresses until death.

Signed and sealed by me this day and year.\*

In the autumn of 1869, Saint Catharine received an appeal from the Rev. P. C. Coll, O. P., of Washington, D. C., for sisters to aid the foundation made by four sisters from Saint Mary, Somerset, the year previous. Three generously responded—Sister Louise Hayden, Sister M. Bertrand Sheridan and Sister M. Aquin Montgomery. They were later joined by Sisters Philomena and Sybillina Sheridan and Sister Teresa Kivlahan. The sisters opened a novitiate, but as vocations did not come to them in proportion to their needs, they affiliated with Saint Clara Community, Sinsinawa Mound, Wisconsin, in 1882.

Another distant call came for sisters in 1873. Directed by relatives among the Dominican clergy,

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\*Archives of Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent.

the Rev. P. J. Mackin, pastor of Holy Saviour Church, Jacksonville, Illinois, asked for a colony of Dominican Sisters. Six sisters were sent to make the new foundation. They were Sister Josephine Meagher, superior, Sister Rachel Conway, Sister Osanna Powell, Sister Alberta Rumpf, Sister Cecilia Carey, and Sister Mary Agnes Maguire. As the school grew, Sisters M. Thomas Wight, M. Catharine Young and Thomasina Simpson were sent to this mission. Later, Sisters Alberta and Osanna returned to Saint Catharine. In July, 1887, the novitiate was moved from Jacksonville to Springfield, Illinois, where the sisters now have a beautiful mother-house. This was the last mission to separate from Saint Catharine.

The close of 1871, brought the great Irish Dominican, Father Thomas Burke to Kentucky. Sent by the Master General as Visitor of the Province of Saint Joseph, Father Burke reached Saint Rose on December 3, 1871. He was a frequent visitor at Saint Catharine and edified all by his simplicity and holiness. He conducted the retreat that opened at Saint Catharine, July 25, 1872, and the sisters eagerly listened to his portrayal of the lofty ideals of the religious life, which he so vividly set before them. The memory of this retreat is still cherished by those who had the privilege of making it. The sisters have preserved as one of their most precious legacies, his sermons during the retreat and these show that he dwelt at length on the strict adherence to the fundamentals of the religious state. The life and work of

Christ, our great Exemplar, were the subjects of all his conferences and meditations. He foresaw the glorious future awaiting the Church in the United States and the important part the Sisters of Saint Dominic would have in it, hence his insistence on the necessity of the highest spiritual attainment.

Frequently are those treasured words of the silver-tongued Irish Dominican read by Saint Catharine's Sisters in their cloistral solitude; and thus from his grave in the land that he loved only second to God, does Father Burke teach and instruct and continue to lead souls on the path of perfection.





## CHAPTER XI

### Sisters Nurse Yellow Fever Victims.

Its probationary period passed, Saint Agnes Academy of Memphis, Tennessee, had entered on a flourishing career. Its novitiate was drawing ardent young souls who multiplied the nascent activities of the community. From their foundation there, the sisters had been closely identified with the life of the city. When war came, it saw them lay aside their own duties to become nurses for the soldiers. There is nothing that so draws people together as suffering and misfortune, and through its long years of warfare, Memphis had come to love and reverence the Sisters of Saint Dominic. When yellow fever, stalking across the South, fell time after time, with appalling vengeance on that city, then more truly than ever did these heroic nuns become for its stricken citizens, angels of mercy.

The first visitation was in the fall of 1867, and Sister Mary Joseph McKernan, the superior of Saint Agnes, left nothing undone in her effort to assuage the suffering and sorrow that overwhelmed the city. She quickened in the hearts of the community their love of souls, and they gladly faced the menace of the yellow plague to minister to their afflicted brethren. Among the novices who responded to her call for volunteers was Sister Agnes Ray. After a short time of service among the sick, she, too, was

stricken on October 30, 1867, and died a martyr of charity. She made her profession on her death-bed, into the hands of the Rev. M. D. Lilly, O. P. Sister Agnes was the only one of the heroic sister-nurses during the plague of 1867 of whom the supreme sacrifice was demanded.

But the martyr-roll she opened for her sisterhood in Memphis was sadly added to when the last days of the summer of 1873 brought the yellow fever again to the city. All the schools were closed, although a few boarders remained at Saint Agnes, where many prayers were offered for the cessation of the plague. Every day the pupils and the sisters in charge of them, made a procession in prayer around the grounds. Their faith was rewarded, and no case of yellow fever appeared at Saint Agnes Academy.

But it was different at LaSalette Academy, which became a hospital where priests and sisters, victims of fidelity to duty, were cared for and where many died. Thither, when they dropped at their posts, were borne the Rev. J. R. Dailey, O. P., the Rev. B. V. Carey, O. P., the Rev. D. A. O'Brien, O. P., and there they died. Cheerfully did the Sisters of Saint Agnes send nurses of their own number to assist their brethren, to minister to them in their dying hours, and to attend them to their graves in Calvary Cemetery.

The superior of LaSalette Academy was Sister Martha Quarry. After the burning of the academy at Jackson, Tennessee, of which she was in charge,

she had taken up her duties at LaSalette. These she now relinquished for one far more arduous which proved to be her last. Her character was of heroic mold. Unmindful of self, she thought only of others, but her service was always gentle and unobtrusive. She was closely associated with Mr. Warfield Semmes in "The Howards," a benevolent association which rendered great service all through the epidemic. Many questions bearing on the fever were submitted to Sister Martha, who was ever ready to help all who appealed to her. But Sister Martha could not content herself with simply directing the aid of the sufferers; her love sent her abroad into the homes of the rich and the hovels of the poor, for, reduced to one level by an enemy more dreadful even than war, the man of wealth and the pauper were equally abandoned.

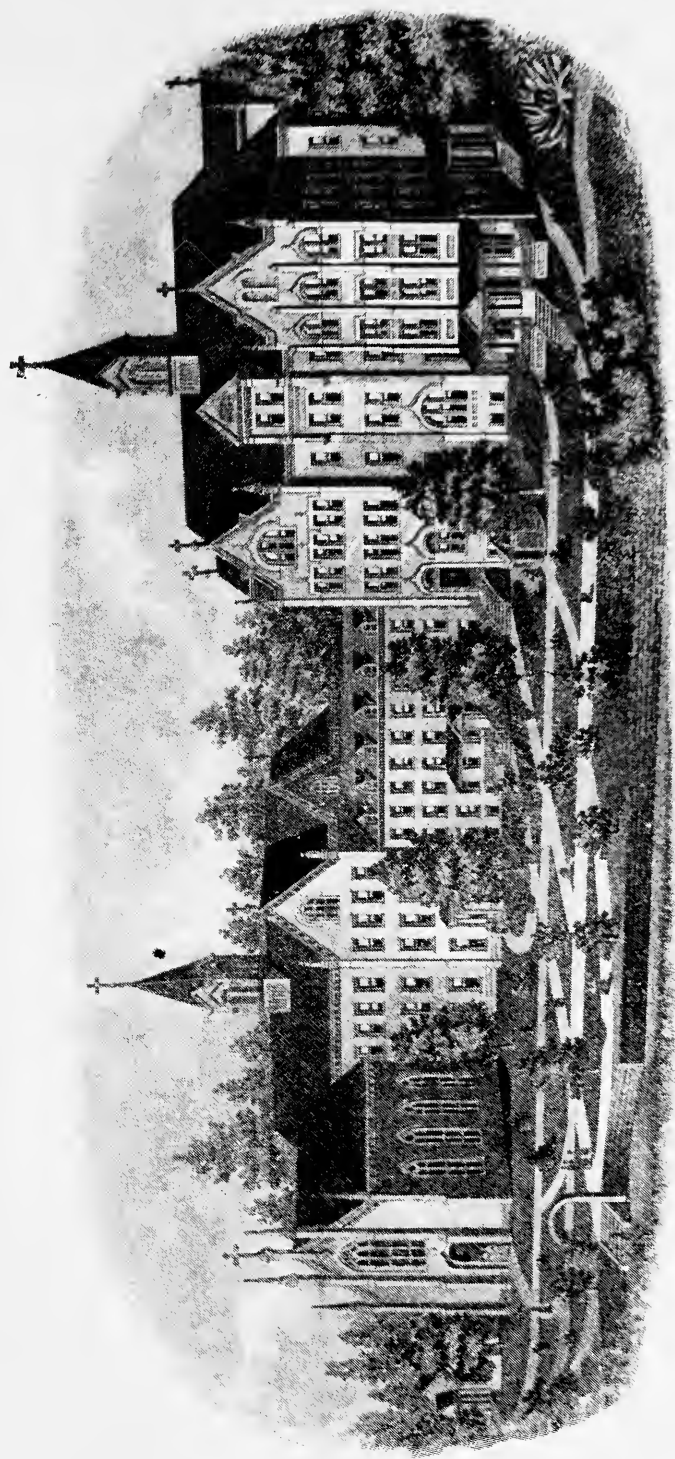
At length, worn out by her long vigils at the beds of the dying, crushed by the sorrow that had made a charnel-house of the beautiful city, Sister Martha fell a victim to the disease she had so splendidly fought. On October 13, 1873, her sufferings ended, and she went to receive her martyr palm. In a city of the dead, her death was bewailed; and a people who had lost all, felt still a new pang of sorrow with Sister Martha's passing away. In her glorious company, went two other sisters, also martyrs to devotion to their fellowman. Sister M. Joseph McKernan died October 8, and Sister Magdalen McKernan followed her sister on October 14.

When those days of anguish were over and the city resumed its normal condition, the Dominican

institutions took up their interrupted labors. The nurse sisters returned to the class-rooms, and in the daily routine, their trying experiences during the plague faded into the background of memory. But in the prosperous after years a cruel day was in store for St. Agnes. On May 16, 1878, the academy accidentally caught fire and was soon reduced to ashes. No lives were lost, and the sisters with their pupils were received at LaSalette Academy where the school was continued. Plans were immediately made for the rebuilding of Saint Agnes and on July 15, 1878, work on the new structure was commenced.

But before its foundation was laid, the rumor that the yellow fever had again appeared in the South was verified as Memphis saw the first of its victims fall. Fear took possession of the city, and its gateways showed a flying people, heedless of their destination so long as it took them from the plague-held town.

Early in the summer, Mother Alphonsa Yagel, superior of St. Agnes, and a companion, had gone North to solicit funds for the rebuilding of her school. In Quincy, Illinois, she received the news that the fever was raging in Memphis, and with her mother-heart shaken by fear for her children, she hastened home. At Nashville, when some of the sisters protested against her continuing her perilous journey, she silenced them with the words: "I must go to Memphis! My duty is there. I must go home. The bishop has given me permission to return. I must go!"



ST. CATHARINE IN 1894



Never was a home-coming sadder than the one Mother Alphonsa found! She reached Memphis at four o'clock in the afternoon of August 16th. The same evening, Rev. J. A. Kelly, O. P., anointed four of her sisters, among them her niece, Sister Veronica Gloss. As there was no hope for her recovery, Sister Veronica was permitted to make her final vows.

On the advice of Father Kelly, Sister Mary Thomas O'Meara took the orphans who had escaped the disease, to the asylum in Nashville, where he had arranged for them to remain until the quarantine was removed. It was also at his suggestion that Mother Alphonsa assembled the community and commanded that the delicate members and those inexperienced in the care of the sick should leave the city, which they did on August 27. Sisters M. Austin Tobin and Magdalen Norton remained in Nashville to take care of the orphans. Sisters Josephine Beck and Claire Glass were received at Saint Bernard Convent, Nashville. Sisters Louise Cain, M. Pius Fitzpatrick, Hyacintha Peters, Joseph Howard, Gertrude Rapp, Ann Simpson, Francis Mahoney, Agnes O'Connor and Imelda Sangler also went to Nashville, but, unable to get accommodations on account of the disturbed conditions, they journeyed on to Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent where they were received with open arms. The coming of these sisters alarmed the people of the neighborhood, and the death of Sister Imelda on September 6, increased their fears. Yet no one suffered because of

Saint Catharine's act of charity in giving a home to the refugees.

Death began to take its toll at Saint Agnes Academy. On the morning of August 28, young Sister Veronica yielded her pure soul back to its Maker. Grief-stricken at the loss of her beloved niece, Mother Alphonsa's thought sped to her mother. But word was brought her that the mother was spared the sorrow, having passed away before her daughter. Sister Dolores Gloss, who had shown symptoms of the disease, had not been allowed to see her sister. When Mother Alphonsa appeared in her room, she knew without being told, the message she bore. Rising silently she accompanied her aunt to the chapel to pray for the soul of her sister.

Sister Veronica's remains had to be buried the same day. As Father Kelly, O. P., was out ministering to the sick, and the other two priests at Saint Peter Rectory were ill, the Rev. Father Aloysius, O. F. M., and Mother Alphonsa accompanied the body to Saint Agnes for interment. When they returned to LaSalette, they found that Sister Dolores had grown worse and it soon became evident that there was no hope for her recovery. Her family snatched from her, her community dispersed, the few who remained, sick or dying, the city doomed—in the face of such a calamity, Mother Alphonsa, exhausted by anxiety and sorrow, dropped at her post. She and Sister Dolores died on the morning of September 6. Sister M. Lawrence Yagel, a sister of Mother Alphonsa, died of the fever on October 4.



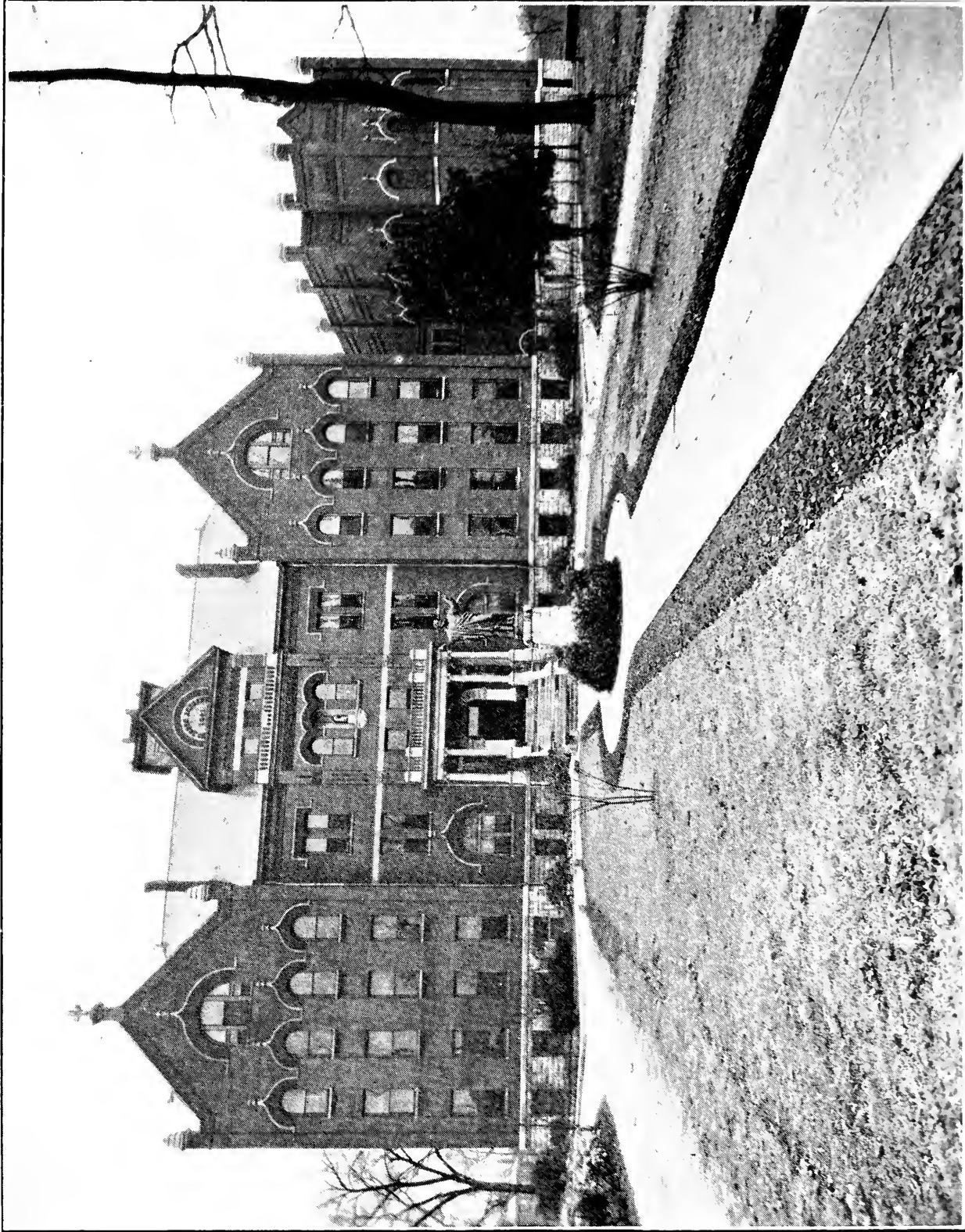
In the annals of these Dominican nuns no name shines with purer lustre than that of Mother Alphonsa. Two nieces and a sister were in her community, but exempting others from danger, she asked no exemption for them, and bore her natural fear and sorrow hidden in her heart. Equally free from thought of self, she tended the stricken in the city and in the community, until she, too, was claimed by the fiery conqueror.

Sister Bernardine Dalton, Sister Rose Callahan and Sister Josepha McGary also made the supreme sacrifice of their lives in the cause of humanity. Of the eleven sisters who remained in Memphis to nurse the stricken, all had the fever, except Sister Mary Thomas O'Meara. Seventeen were sick in the convent at one time. At last Sister M. Thomas was obliged to call on the Howard Association for assistance, but she herself prepared the bodies of the sisters for burial. She rode in the wagon to the cemetery to assure herself that they were buried at once and that their graves were sufficiently deep. How this frail woman lived through these days when fear ruled and death rode rampant, is one of those mysteries that so frequently confront us in life. Some of her sisters were in exile, others were dead, the remainder sick; she alone of the once flourishing community remained on duty, and that duty held her night and day. There was no respite; her sleep was in snatches, her prayers and aspirations were breathed forth to God in the midst of her ministrations, and food was taken only at the insistence of nature. Doubtless, as she laid her

sisters in their hastily made graves, poor Sister Mary Thomas yearned to lay down her breaking burden, too, and felt that she could not face again the scenes of agony waiting her in the doomed city. But to duty's "must," ever the valiant soul replies, "I can!" and the next hour found Sister Mary Thomas at her post.

Not unworthy of being named among these heroines is a young woman, who, aspiring to the higher life, had traveled from the East at this period to seek admission into Saint Agnes Community. Reaching Tennessee, she was advised to consider the situation and to think of the danger she was running in entering the plague-infested zone. Her reply was characteristic of the Celtic blood which her family name of Fogarty implies: "I wanted to go to Saint Agnes before the fever and will not change my mind now because of it." Nor did she; but she remained for weeks in Nashville until she had an opportunity to go to Memphis. She received the Dominican habit and the name of Sister Mary Bernard at LaSalette Academy, March 7, 1879, and a year later was professed. Remember her name! You will find it blazing forth from a tragic page of Saint Catharine's history, when Sister Mary Bernard Fogarty's heroism met a fiery test.

Only eight of the Dominican Sisters stricken with the fever recovered, and that but slowly. As soon as their strength permitted, they again went about ministering to the sick and dying. Fearlessly, the sisters came and went at all hours. No part of



ST. AGNES ACADEMY, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE, 1922



the city but knew them, and their mission of charity won them veneration, and strengthened the ties of love and gratitude that bound them to the people. Children, orphaned by the plague, were taken to the sisters, who cared for them as well as their circumstances would permit, and many received the regenerating waters of baptism, before they, too, fell victims of the plague.

With the approach of winter, the fever abated, and the absentees were permitted to return to Memphis. The work on the building of Saint Agnes Academy was resumed. The following summer it was ready for occupancy. On July 17, 1879, the Rev. J. A. Kelly, O. P., said Mass for the first time in the new convent and blessed the whole house. The same day the papers announced the re-appearance of yellow fever. Hoping it was a false alarm, the sisters entered on their annual retreat; but the whispers that reached them of the spread of the disease kept them in constant alarm. Finally, the city authorities ordered the inhabitants to leave the city. Camps were established several miles outside of the town to which the people were taken. On the eve of the close of the retreat, the superior, Mother Mary Thomas, summoned the sisters and told them to prepare to go to Nashville. Saint Agnes was again closed. Three sisters volunteered to remain at La-Salette Academy to nurse the victims, some others went to Saint Peter Orphanage to care for the children. Five sisters were sent to Jackson, Tennessee, to open a day school. The rest of the community

was given hospitality at Saint Cecilia Academy, Nashville, Saint Catharine, Kentucky, and Saint Mary, Somerset, Ohio. The fever wrought havoc among the people who remained in the city, but this time no sisters were claimed, although several priests died, among them Father Reveille, O. P., who had given the sisters their retreat that year.

The eighth of November found the sisters back again at Saint Agnes Academy, and classes were opened on the seventeenth of the month. The enrollment was small, but the sisters placed their reliance upon Divine Providence and knew that He would provide. The following December, sisters from Saint Agnes began to teach in Saint Patrick parochial school, which mission they held for two years, when the increased attendance at the academy made their recall necessary.

The first school for colored children in Memphis was opened in 1888 by the Sisters of Saint Agnes Academy, in the sodality hall of Saint Peter Church, in response to the request of the pastor, the Rev. J. P. Moran, O. P. Sister Mary Agnes Brown was in charge of the school which was attended by about sixty pupils. The enrollment increased until one hundred and seventy children were receiving a religious education. The school was removed later to the house on Henry Avenue, formerly occupied by the orphans. For seven years, Father Moran and the sisters labored to improve the condition of the colored people of Memphis, especially

of the rising generation. Their efforts helped to make the work of those who succeeded them less difficult than it would otherwise have been. During the year 1895 the school was closed.

While Saint Agnes Academy, so dear to the people of the South through sentiment and tradition, continued to enjoy an extensive patronage, it was evident that the work of the devoted sisters deserved this public recognition and the school was accounted an excellent educational institution.

To secure greater concentration of effort and to consolidate the good work being done by the student body of both academies, it was deemed advisable by the faculty to close LaSalette and transfer the pupils to Saint Agnes, whose beautiful location in Saint Agnes Park was more conducive to study and intellectual pursuits. During the year 1891 this project was completed, and the LaSalette property situated on Second Street in the heart of the city, was sold to the Nineteenth Century Club, a very exclusive woman's club organized by the elite of Memphis.





## CHAPTER XII

### Mother Regina O'Meara And Her Work

The beginning of the seventies brought to the office of prioress of Saint Catharine Congregation, Mother Regina O'Meara, one of its most beloved members. Frances O'Meara was born on a farm in the town of Faunlough, two miles south of Ne-naugh, County Tipperary, Ireland. She was the youngest of the family, the only surviving member of which is Mr. Michael O'Meara, of Cincinnati, Ohio. The family left Ireland January 20, 1851, and reached Cincinnati, April 20, after a long and perilous voyage.

The piety of the Celtic race was strongly marked in the O'Meara family, and responding to the call of the Holy Spirit, Frances and her two sisters, Ann and Honora, entered the novitiate of Saint Catharine, October 11, 1854, receiving the names of Sister Regina, Sister M. Thomas, and Sister Gertrude, respectively. Soon after her profession in 1859, Sister Gertrude was sent to Nashville, where she died July 7, 1864.

Sister M. Thomas O'Meara, as we have seen, was closely identified with Saint Agnes Academy, having spent her entire religious life there, except its last four years, which were passed at Saint Catharine, preparing for the final scene in her eventful career.

After fifty-nine years in the Order, she went to her reward on January 20, 1913.

Sister Regina taught at Saint Catharine with great success. In the summer of 1868, she was made superior of Holy Rosary Academy, Louisville. Her courage and self-forgetfulness and deep religious principles were exemplified in her office and caused her to be chosen prioress at the election of January 6, 1871. When the result of the election was declared, Sister Regina was momentarily stunned by the announcement, and then vehemently declared that she would not and could not accept a position for which she felt herself unfitted. Yielding to obedience, she assumed the office and proved herself equal to its most exacting requirements. She was re-elected August 4, 1873, and again served from 1879 to 1891. As we shall see, her administrations were wise and prudent and under her, the Order, to which she was most loyal, witnessed a remarkable growth.

During Mother Regina's first term of office, the Rev. Francis Cubero, O. P., came to Saint Catharine as permanent chaplain. Little is known of the early life of Father Cubero, other than that he was born on the seventh of March, 1807, at Saragossa, Spain. After making his elementary studies in his native city, he entered the Dominican Order while still young. When Queen Christina of Spain exiled all the religious from her realm, Father Cubero, then a student, fled to the house of the Order at Viterbo, and, completing his theological studies, was or-

dained there in 1837, by Bishop, afterward, Cardinal, Pianetto. From Viterbo, Father Cubero went to Rome and was assistant at the Church of the Minerva until 1841.

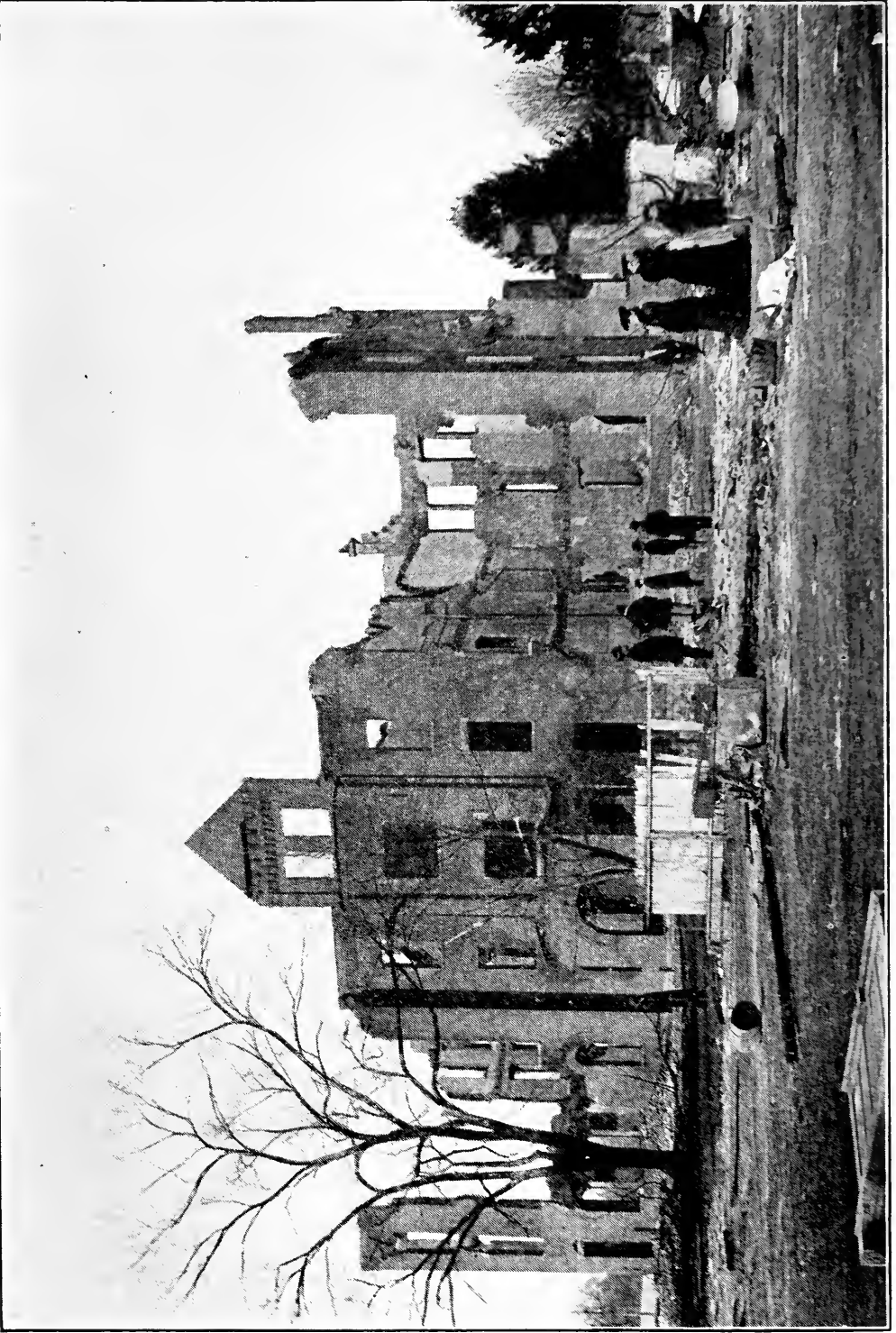
Prevented from returning to his native land by the persecutions, he decided to take up missionary work in the New World. He was accompanied on his journey hither by the Rev. Joseph Sadoc Alemany, O. P., who helped to establish the Order in California, was the first bishop of Monterey, and later first archbishop of San Francisco. The two priests, who had traveled thousands of miles to assist their brethren, were received with open arms by the scattered Catholics of Ohio and Kentucky.

Father Cubero labored for a number of years at Dayton, Ohio, where he and the Rev. Richard Gilmour, pastor of Saint Joseph Church, became fast friends. In Father Cubero's declining days, Bishop Gilmour paid several visits to Saint Catharine to see his companion of pioneer times. Father Cubero also ministered to the faithful at Louisville, Kentucky. He had good command of the English language, and preached the Word of God with an earnestness that few could withstand. His passion seems to have been to assist in building up the Order of the Sisters of Saint Dominic. In his stern but kind way, he ever sought to show the sisters that the great need of the Church is religious with living faith, and ability to sacrifice themselves freely for the honor and glory of God.

Father Cubero took up his residence at Saint Catharine on February 13, 1872, and remained there until his death, July 15, 1883. Of all the benefactors of Saint Catharine, none gave so unsparingly as Father Cubero. Great issues were at stake when he cast his lot with the community. One of his first acts was to pay off a debt of eight thousand dollars. He could do this, as Pope Gregory XVI had made him an Apostolic missionary to the United States, with special faculties. He built a comfortable cottage for himself, and furnished it to his own liking. He had the chapel remodeled and decorated, and purchased the beautiful Calvary group, which is over the main altar of Saint Catharine Chapel. He also purchased the Munich statues of Saint Dominic and Saint Catharine, which adorn the front hall of the second floor of the present building. The library was almost entirely his gift.

From first to last his devotedness was unfailing. His memory is loved and revered by the community who rightly regard him as a good father and benefactor, and his name is held in benediction at Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent.

On December 13, 1878, Sister Catharine Frances Coppe, the superior of Holy Rosary Academy, died suddenly. She was born in France, and entered the Third Order established by Father Lacordaire. He gave the habit to her and Sister Rosalia, but before they made their profession, Bishop Alemany of Monterey, California, visited the convent to secure co-laborers for his distant vineyard. With the su-



AFTER THE FIRE, JANUARY 3, 1904



perior's permission he induced these two novices to accompany him. Mother Mary Goemaere, a nun of the Second Order also responded to his appeal. At Somerset, Ohio, the two French novices were exchanged for two English-speaking nuns, Sister M. Frances Stafford and Sister M. Aloysius O'Neil; the latter was the adopted sister of Mrs. William Tecumseh Sherman. After Sister Catharine Frances and Sister Rosalia had made their profession, the provincial transferred them to Saint Catharine. Later, Sister Rosalia was sent to Saint Agnes Academy to teach French.

One of the notable events of this period at the mother-house was the visit paid it June 22, 1881, by the Master General of the Dominican Order, the Most Rev. Joseph M. Larocca. He was accompanied by his socius and interpreter, the Rev. J. J. Carberry, O. P., later bishop of Hamilton, Province of Ontario, Canada. An account of this visit, written in the Profession Book by Sister Dolores Mattingly, says:

This was a great and memorable event in the annals of the community. For several days previous to the visit, the convent was the scene of unusual activities. Everything wore a look of joyful expectation, the unusual bustle, the quick and noiseless steps of the sisters as they glided from room to room, placing a flower here, adjusting a curtain there. The well-kept lawn, too, received its share of attention in order that nothing might mar the peace and loveliness of the scene. Oh, what a joy this day brought! A joy and pleasure new and strange, such as the sisters of Saint Catharine of Sienna community had never known, since they saw seated in their midst for the first time the representative of their founder and father, Saint Dominic.

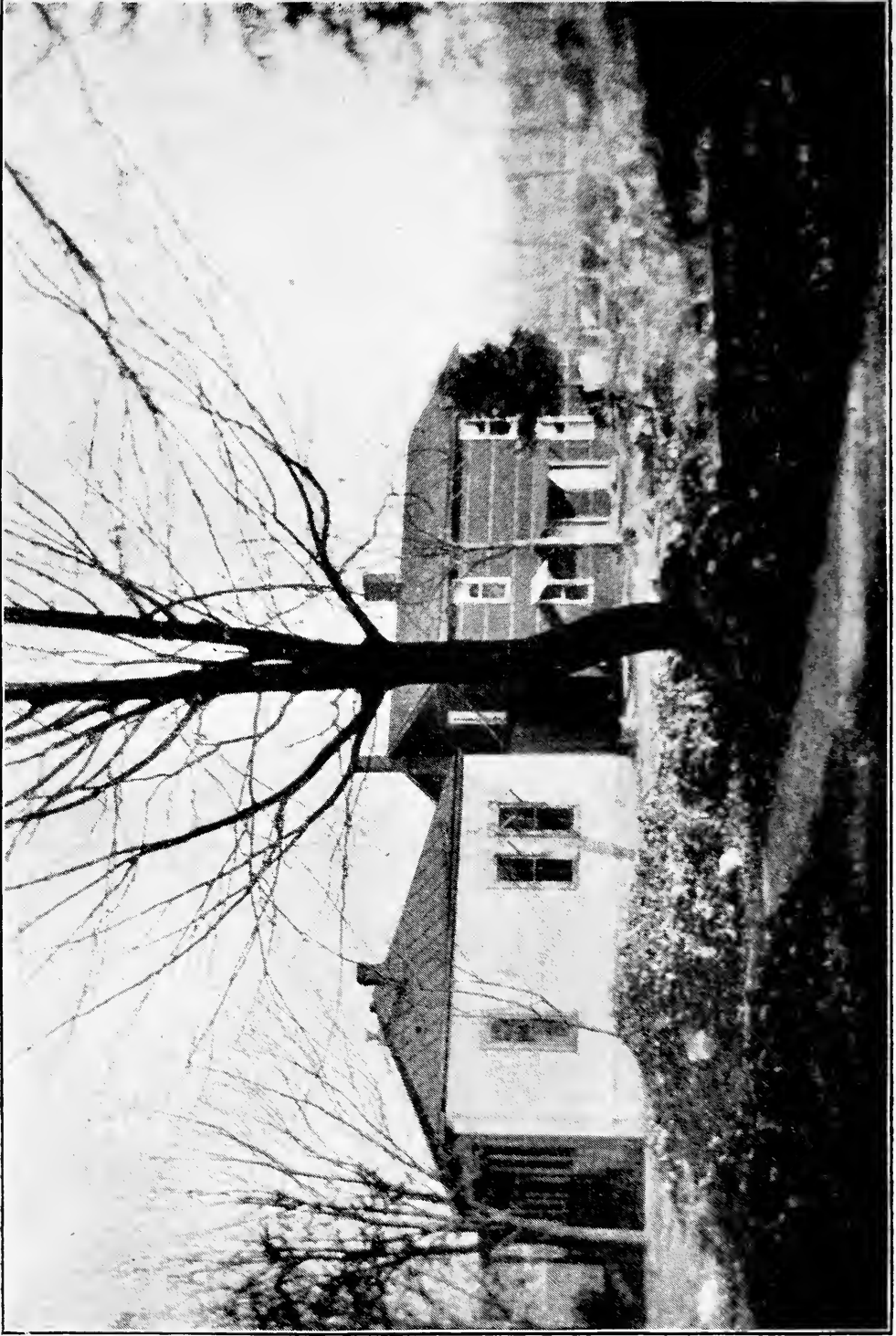
The Master General was rather slight in stature, but his countenance was benign and his eye quick, penetrating and full

of expression. One thing marred the pleasure of the visit, the inability to converse with him in person, though this difficulty was greatly diminished by the kindness of the Rev. J. J. Carberry and our own chaplain, Rev. Francis Cubero, whose heart overflowed at meeting one who was his spiritual father. But this meeting was rendered still dearer by another fact, that of acquaintance and connection with some of the companions of his novitiate days. Father Cubero was thus able to get much interesting information concerning the friends of his youth, and to arrange all his affairs with the Master General, as he realized that he was growing old.

Having spent an hour in the community room, the Vesper bell rang and the Master General and his companions repaired to the chapel where the sisters chanted the office and sang the *Salve Regina* processionally according to the Dominican rite. When the *O Lumen* was concluded, the Master General gave Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, after which Father Carberry delivered an appropriate and beautiful instruction, speaking in the name of the Master General as well as his own. He expressed both pleasure and surprise at finding in this distant land, so well regulated and flourishing an institution of the Order. When the evening repast had been served, the visitors were taken through the academy and convent buildings, examining minutely every department, and listening with interest to every detail, at the same time showing evident signs of satisfaction and approval. When the tour of the house had been made, the visitors were escorted to the hall where the students entertained them for an hour. In pleasing and complimentary words, Father Carberry thanked the girls, and wished them a happy vacation, adding many things calculated to please the youthful heart. He commended particularly the rendition of the closing hymn, *Inflammatus Est*, from Rossini's *Stabat Mater*. The Master General gave the students his blessing, and then returned to the community room, where he, Fathers Carberry, Kent and Cubero, visited with the sisters for a while, then retired for the night.

On the following morning, the Master General sang the High Mass and gave Holy Communion and general absolution to the sisters. At the close of the Mass, he gave the Apostolic blessing and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. At nine o'clock the sisters gathered around him to hear his parting admonition, and again receive his blessing. His last words of counsel, given through Father Carberry, were beautiful and consoling. He especially recommended charity, exhorting the sisters to be of one heart,





THE PAPER HOUSE AFTER THE FIRE JANUARY 3, 1904



and to be faithful to their Rule and Constitution, and to pray for him and the Order. At ten o'clock, in company with Fathers Carberry, Kent and Cubero, he insisted on walking to Saint Rose, against the protests of the sisters. The sisters accompanied him to the gate and remained there until he reached the top of the knoll, when he turned, raised his hand in benediction and disappeared from sight.\*

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\*Archives of Saint Catharine of Sienna.



## CHAPTER XIII

### Missionary Work Among Colored Children— Other Schools

Christ's command to go forth and teach all nations has ever been fulfilled in spirit and in letter by His chosen followers. The emancipation of the slaves had turned adrift the Catholic colored people of this part of Kentucky, and the possible loss of faith among them and their descendants was a matter of grave concern. Schools were necessary; so we find them being established, and nuns, repressing any natural feeling, engaged as teachers for the children of their former servants.

In Washington County the number of these children was large and their condition appealed to the prior of Saint Rose, the Rev. C. L. Egan, O. P., who turned to St. Catharine for the needed help. Mother Angela Lynch, who had succeeded Mother Regina as prioress in 1876, responded to his appeal and in the spring of 1877 the work of founding a school for colored children was actively begun. Mother Angela and Sister Ann O'Brien went through the parishes of Saint Rose and Saint Dominic, Springfield, soliciting funds for the purchase of land and lumber and for the erection of the building.

Crippled as the people were by the war, and embittered by their losses, they were not insensible to their duty toward their former servants, and with the shining ex-

ample of the fathers of Saint Rose and the sisters of St. Catharine before them, they gave what they could. The largest contributors to the work, besides the communities of St. Rose and Saint Catharine, were Father Cubero and the Misses Fannie and Rose Howe. The colored people entered enthusiastically into the project and gave their time, when unable to contribute money. A site was bought from Mr. McElroy in the Briartown township. The school was built at the rear of the property, the front being reserved for a future church for the race. As the lumber had to be hauled from Lebanon, the building was not ready for the opening of school in September. Mrs. Mary Spalding (colored) offered two rooms of her house and classes were begun, Sister Ann and Sister Louis Murphy being the first teachers. There was a rush for entrance, parents and even grand parents seeking admission with the children. One old colored woman of seventy, pleaded earnestly to be permitted to attend in order that she might learn to read her prayerbook. The sisters could not refuse her appeal, but after a few weeks she was stricken with mortal illness and died a beautiful Christian death.

Prominent among the sisters of Saint Dominic who have labored to refine and instruct the colored children of this section are Sister M. Sienna Byrne, and Sister Stephana Cassidy, the latter a niece of the renowned missionary and preacher, Rev. Charles McKenna, O. P., of happy memory. Others also have given their unstinted service in this field and are

loved and revered by the colored people of Washington County.

The year 1880 saw the sisters placed in charge of a public school in response to the request of Messrs. Robert Clements, L. A. Hamilton and Billy Smith of the Clements District in Washington County. The school was built and equipped and in October, 1880, Sisters Ann and Francis Slinger opened classes. At the present time the school is under the able supervision of Sister Louis Bertrand Lancaster and Sister Priscilla Lyons. In the years it has existed, it has done yeoman service for rural education in Kentucky and the superintendent of schools of Washington County has frequently paid tribute to the efficiency of Saint Agnes School. This school has given a number of devoted members to the community, among them Sister Bernadette, the present prioress of Saint Catharine of Sienna.

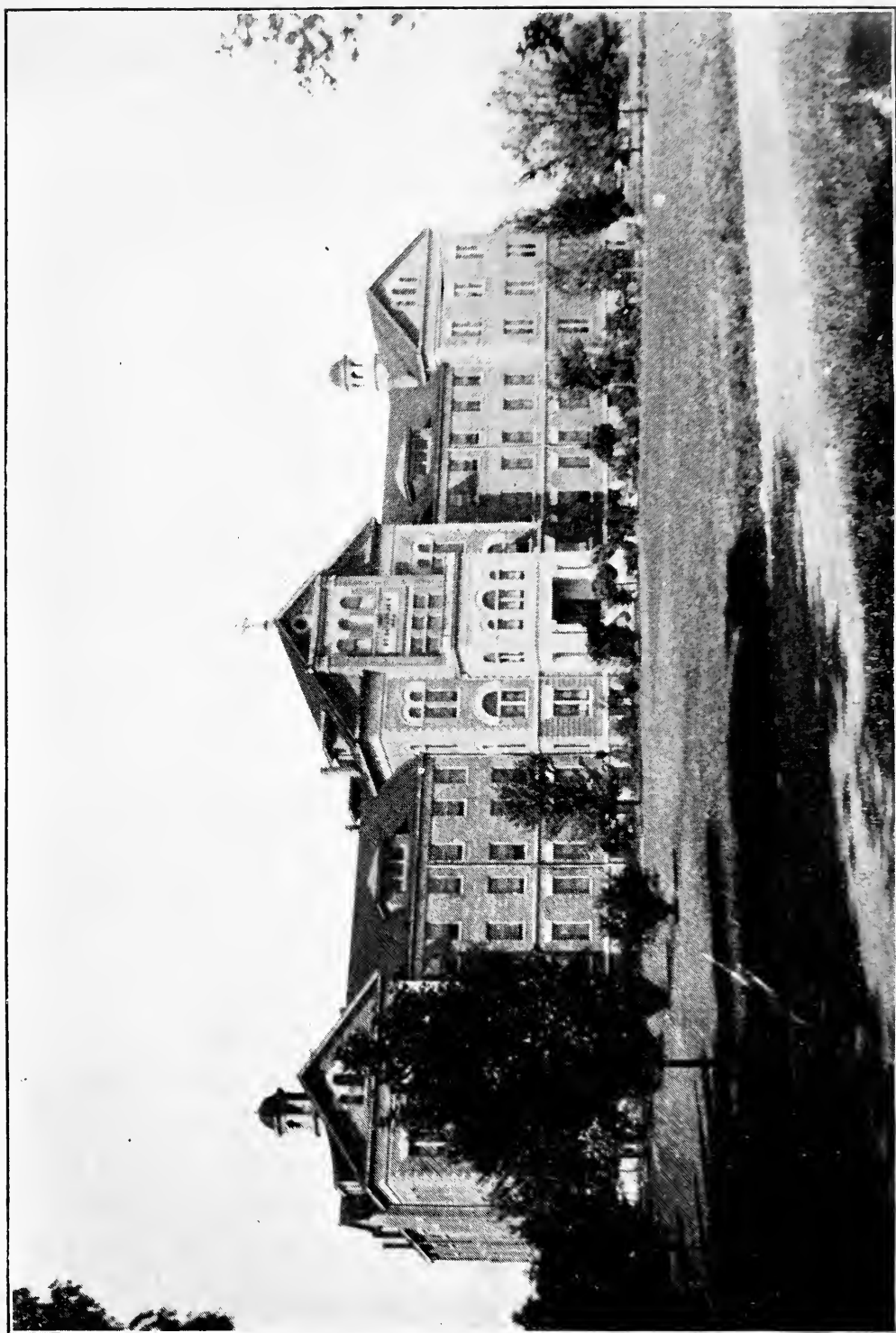
Saint Rose District School was opened the following year, 1881, with Sister M. Lawrence Blandford and Sister Angelica McGill as pioneer instructors. It has sent out good men and women, many of whom are now holding positions of trust and responsibility. One of its pupils is the Rev. Victor F. O'Daniel, O. P., the historian and archivist of the Saint Joseph Province. Owing to the difficulty attending the transportation of the sisters to and from the school, it was discontinued in 1888, but was reopened August 18, 1919, through the zeal of the Rev. J. A. Mackin, O. P., and the Rev. Mother Francesca,

Mother General of Saint Catharine. Sisters Baptist Riley and Mario Caplinger are the teachers at the present time.

Springfield was next blessed with the presence of the Dominican nuns. The county seat of Washington County was laid out in 1793, and took its name from two springs which poured their waters into the creek near the place where the railway station now stands. The country for miles around was owned by Mr. Matthew Walton, who surveyed it and entered it by patent signed by Patrick Henry, Governor of Virginia. Mr. Walton gave the land for the courthouse and the turnpikes for ten miles in every direction. The first brick house in Washington County was erected by Mr. Walton on a farm now owned by Mrs. J. R. Barber, on the Bardstown pike nearly opposite Sienna Heights.

In the fall of 1881, Rev. Father Garvey, O. P., pastor of Saint Dominic Church, urged the people to aid him in the erection of a parochial school in which their children could daily receive the instruction necessary for the reception of the sacraments as well as instruction in secular studies. A committee composed of Messrs. Lum Cambron, Will Fred Booker and G. D. Robertson went through the parish and collected the money necessary for the purchase of land and the construction of a building. The work was begun, but the winter set in before it was completed. While overseeing the building, Father Garvey contracted a cold which developed into pneumonia, causing his death February 16, 1882.





SAINT CATHARINE IN 1922



His uncompleted work was continued by his successor, the Rev. J. A. Durkin, O. P., and the school was ready for occupancy in September, 1882. Its first teachers were Sister Ann O'Brien, Sister Hyacintha Reed, Sister Gertrude Hogan and Sister M. Thomas O'Leary. In October, 1882, the Dominican Fathers withdrew from Saint Dominic Church and the Rev. Father McHenry was appointed pastor, with the Rev. Joseph Hogarty, assistant. The spring following, Father Hogarty was made pastor. In June, 1887, Saint Dominic school was closed and the building was converted into a parochial residence.

Illinois again sought the aid of the Kentucky Dominicans in extending its educational work, in the summer of 1882, when the Rev. John W. Crowe, pastor of Saint Joseph Church, Mattoon, asked Mother Regina for teachers for his school. Father Crowe was a zealous and earnest priest who spent himself for his people, and his ardent wish to see a parochial school established, was granted when Sister Ann O'Brien, Sister Mary Dominic Simms and Sister Aloysius Mullican arrived to make a foundation. Later in the same year, Sister Columba Ryan was sent to assist in the school. At that time the parish buildings were frame. When the church was destroyed by fire, the present brick structure was erected. A brick convent and school were built by Father Murphy in 1893. In 1914, the Rev. J. J. Higgins built a beautiful modern convent for the sisters.

In the latter part of May, 1917, a tornado swept through the north side of Mattoon, destroying

everything in its path. Over fifty persons were killed and many others were injured. All the families in the devastated section were rendered homeless. The church was damaged to a considerable extent, but the convent escaped the destructive visitation. Its doors were thrown open to those in distress, and the victims were cared for by the sisters. Some of the sisters went to Memorial Hospital to assist in nursing the injured.

Among the sisters who have labored in Mattoon, Sister Ann O'Brien, the first superior, is held in loving remembrance. When incapacitated by age, and her work on the missions had to be relinquished, she went back to the home of her spiritual childhood, whence she was called, March 21, 1920, to her everlasting home. Sister Aloysius Mullican found her field of labor chiefly in the class room. Sister Reginald Mullican too, labored in Mattoon, and her name is held in veneration there as well as in many other schools of the Congregation. She died July 3, 1911, revered by those who knew her most intimately. Sister M. Dominic Simms has been more closely connected with the mission in Mattoon than any other member of the community. She has occupied the position of superior and music teacher at different intervals, and has ever striven to advance the interests of the school and the Order. At present Sister Sebastian Conly is in charge.

A parochial school was opened at Marshall, Illinois, in September, 1884, with Sister Francis Slinger, superior. The following year the pastor of Paris,

Illinois, invited the sisters to take charge of the parochial school in that town. Sister M. Lawrence Blandford acted as superior. The sisters had high hopes of flourishing foundations in both these places, but conditions did not prove favorable and as there was no certainty of the sisters having a chapel in their convent, they were withdrawn.

The parochial school system was entering on that era of growth and expansion which has brought it, in our day, to a notable place in primary education. Bishops desired to see the school built with the church, and pastors, aided by their self-sacrificing congregations, bent every effort to carry out the wishes of their superiors. The religious Orders, with characteristic generosity, did not hesitate to curtail, when needful, the facilities of their private institutions in order to meet the growing demand for teachers; and the members selected gladly abandoned their comfortable homes and their communities to enter the mission field with its hardships. The new home was often cramped, the school overcrowded, and they were called upon to endure many spiritual and physical privations; many a nun has sacrificed her very life in the performance of her duty in the parochial school. But when one fell, another stepped into her place to continue the work of Christian charity. Truly has the Most Rev. Archbishop Glennon of Saint Louis said: "The work of education requires greater self-sacrifice and higher consecration of purpose than devotion to a life of charity in the alleviation of bodily suffering. After

all, charity in this significance, caring for souls, teaching the poor in spiritual things to know God, was the special work of the Lord."

Two parochial schools were opened by the sisters in Kentucky in 1886. The Rev. W. M. Buckman of Fredericksburg asked for two teachers and Sister M. Bertrand Sheehan and Sister Dominica Lannigan were sent to open the mission. It grew and flourished for several years, and was regretfully abandoned to meet the need of the eastern schools.

About the same time, the Rev. Father Creary, pastor of Saint Bridget Parish, Louisville, petitioned Mother Regina to send him sisters for his school. Sister Angela Lynch, Sister M. Stanislaus Davis, Sister Columba Ryan, Sister Raphael Huber and Sister Martina Nealy responded. The sisters labored with great earnestness and charity in this parish.

But the increase in parochial school work in no way interfered with the work of the academies of the Congregation, as the annual increase in pupils evinced. At Saint Catharine this was notably high, and the spacious dormitories had few vacant beds, the class rooms were crowded with pupils some of whom were from distant parts of the country, for Saint Catharine's educational fame was wide-spread. Holy Rosary Academy in Louisville was outgrowing its quarters and the necessity of a larger building, in more suitable environment, was evident. Saint Agnes Academy, Memphis, was continuing to enjoy



MAIN ENTRANCE TO SAINT CATHARINE





a patronage that represented almost all the southern states.

Mother Regina O'Meara had, in 1879, been recalled to the office of prioress of Saint Catharine. Re-elected for three other consecutive terms, she had the distinction of serving the Order longer than any other superior of Saint Catharine. Each of her terms justified the confidence the Congregation reposed in her ability. During her term of 1885-1888, and while her sister, Sister Mary Thomas O'Meara, was superior of Saint Agnes Academy, Memphis, an event notable in the history of the two houses took place, in the re-union of Saint Agnes with Saint Catharine.

The death of many sisters during the yellow fever, the drain occasioned by the founding of other houses, the falling off of applicants to the novitiate, with other reasons, pointed to the advisability of such a step for Saint Agnes; and naturally the southern community turned toward the mother-house in Kentucky. It was received with the joy which the return of an absent child occasions, and both communities were the stronger for the union which took place in 1887.

Two deaths occurred about this time at Saint Catharine that should be here recorded. The first was that of Sister Rose Tennelly, one of the founders, who rested from her labors February 20, 1886. Twice called to the office of prioress in the crucial early days of the society's existence, she governed it with wisdom. With a childlike reliance

upon Divine Providence, she never lost courage however discouraging the situation might be. Faithfully she worked, labored and prayed, and her faith met with the promised reward.

The other was Sister Osanna Hayden, whose brief religious life ended in the novitiate, July 19, 1887. A year previous, at the age of eighteen, she had resolved to consecrate herself to God. An example of gentleness, patience and humility to her sister novices, it appeared that in this daughter of a line noted for the generosity of its offerings to the religious state, Saint Catharine would have a worthy and helpful member. But at the end of her year of probation, her sacrifice was accepted and God called her to Himself. What Sister Rose Tennyly accomplished in many years, Sister Osanna Hayden completed in a brief time.

## CHAPTER XIV

### Missions in the East and the West

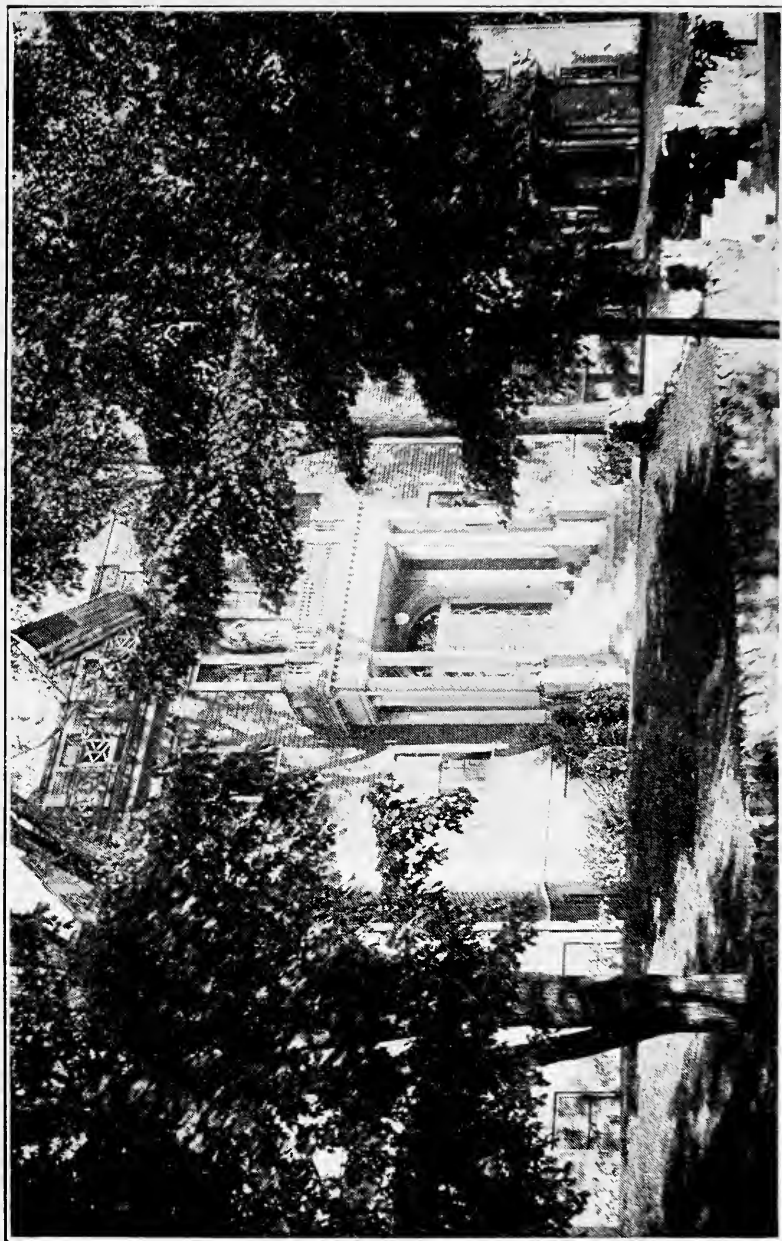
Hitherto, the missions established by Saint Catharine had been confined to Kentucky and adjoining states, but in 1888 the call for a foundation came from the Atlantic Coast. The fame of the Kentucky Dominicans had penetrated the East, and when the pastor of Saint Patrick Church, Watertown, Massachusetts, the Rev. Robert P. Stack, desired to open a parochial school, it was to the Dominican Mother-house he applied. We can imagine there was some lifting of eyebrows at the idea of going beyond the sacred precincts of the old Bay State for teachers for one of its schools; but Father Stack relied on the high recommendation given the Dominican Sisters by his friend, the Rev. Louis O'Neil, O. P., and he made his application accordingly.

Mother Regina was aware of the importance of the new field offered to her and she sent to it a colony representative of the high educational standing and deep religious spirit of the Order. The band included Sister Vincentia Maguire, superior; Sister Vincent Ferrer Thompson, Sister Agnes Hunt, Sister M. Bertrand Sheehan, Sister Cecilia Kennedy, Sister Bridget Connelly and Sister Margaret Hamilton. They reached Watertown, August 28 1888, and were welcomed by Father Stack, who offered them

the hospitality of his own home, as their convent was not quite ready. The sisters, in their unfamiliar garb, were objects of much attention at services in the church, or when they appeared on the streets, but this strangeness soon faded and in its place came a strong attachment for the Sisters of Saint Patrick School.

The following days were busy ones for the sisters, making ready their convent and school. They found willing assistants in the curates, the Rev. T. W. Coughlan and the Rev. John Sheridan, the latter then a student at Boston College. The classes opened on September 10, 1888, and the pupils came in such numbers that the teachers could not manage them. Father Stack immediately called for two more teachers, and Sister Mary Oscamp and Sister Imelda Brady were hurried to the eastern mission. This brought the community to nine members, a large number for a parochial school, at that time.

Of the original band who traveled far to inaugurate the work of the Order among strangers, Sister Bridget alone remains at Saint Patrick, although during her thirty-three years in the East, she also labored as a founder in the houses at Charlestown, West Lynn and East Boston. Sister Vincent Ferrer and Sister Agnes have been called to their reward, after serving as prioress, the former from 1891 to 1897, the latter from 1900 to 1906. Sister Vincentia Maguire is still an active member of the community at Saint Catharine and Sister M. Bertrand continues her work in the West. Sister Margaret



SAINT DOMINIC ACADEMY, WAVERLY, MASS.



Hamilton is now a member of the council and also directress of studies at Saint Catharine Academy. Another name intimately connected with the early days of Saint Patrick mission, is that of Sister Bernardine Bushue, who, in 1889, was added to the community. For ten years she labored among the young people, especially the boys, and to many of the men and women of Watertown to-day, the memory of her name is a benediction. From her labors on the missions, she was called in 1897 to the office of prioress of Saint Catharine. She did not seek or want the high honor bestowed upon her by her community, but, bound by obedience, she accepted it; and the zeal for souls and devotion to duty that had characterized her in the lowly places, continued to mark her as superior. At the expiration of her term of office, she was sent to Saint Agnes Academy, Memphis. Here, her health began to fail, and October 4, 1903, she rested from her labors.

The mission so auspiciously commenced at Saint Patrick continued to increase its scope of usefulness. No small measure of the success attached to the work of the sisters is due to the good pastors with whom that parish has been blessed. Their co-operation and unfailing kindness naturally had a stimulating effect. As should always be the case, there was a perfect union of interest; but those big-hearted and sensible priests were also considerate and sympathetic. They thought of the sisters out of the classroom, and in it, and the record of their years at Saint Patrick, written by one of the sisters, is an uninterrupted

story of the tender affection that united the pastors of Saint Patrick with the sisters. Some one might say insignificant things are set down; but are such not often more eloquent than the important gesture? A straw shows the direction of the wind as plainly as the bending of a tree before its strength.

In the fall of 1891, Father Stack opened a classical high school for girls and Sister Hyacintha Peters was sent from Memphis to assume charge of it. She was the only daughter of the late Major and Mrs. Peters of Chillicothe, Ohio, and at an early age had responded to the Master's call and entered the novitiate at Memphis, August 21, 1866. She was invested with the habit, March 25, 1867, and one year later pronounced her vows, and has ever served her Order with fidelity. On March 15, 1918, she celebrated her golden jubilee at Saint Agnes Academy, where she still lives and labors.

The enrollment was small, but from the humble beginning sprang the parish commercial high school for boys and girls. It embraces a three years' course, and has a regular attendance of nearly one hundred students. During the second term of the third year, the pupils are required to go to Boston to take an examination. Not only do they pass the tests well, but in the majority of cases they obtain a hundred per cent. The result is that before the June closing, every graduate holds a position and is self-supporting. Sister Mary Michael Walsh was connected with the high school for many years, and aided largely in its success. At present, Sister Mary Michael is



prefect at Saint Catharine, Kentucky, and a teacher in the commercial department there.

In the grades, this efficiency is also high, as the diocesan examinations show. Of the seven scholarships offered to the pupils of the archdiocesan parochial schools in 1903, four were carried off by the Saint Patrick boys and girls. The Rev. Supervisor of the diocesan schools, Father Walsh, in making the announcement, called Saint Patrick the leading school in the archdiocese of Boston.

Nor was other praise from high authority wanting. In an article written in 1893 on the progress of the Catholic Church in Watertown, the author, Rev. T. W. Coughlan says: "The crowning event of his (Father Stack) successful career is the parochial school, that glorious institution within whose hallowed walls are instilled those lessons of morality and patriotism so essential in the life of to-day. \* \* \* There it is that the youth of our country receive those lessons which make them better, nobler soldiers of Christ, and truer, more loyal citizens of the Republic."

When the school, during the months of September and October, 1891, was exposed to a persecution of bigotry, unparalleled, perhaps, in any other section of New England, Father Coughlan's trenchant pen was employed with telling effect in the defense of the sisters and of the school. Even after his curacy at Saint Patrick ended, Father Coughlan remained the good friend of the sisters.

In the fall of 1891 we find the first flag-raising for many years over a school in Watertown, per-

formed at Saint Patrick. This was the first flag raised over any parochial school in Massachusetts. It was presented by Mr. M. A. Forrest, Commander of the Isaac B. Patten Post 81, G. A. R., and the ceremony was largely attended by the citizens. In the course of his presentation address, Mr. Forrest said: "In vain will our enemies impugn the great fact of Catholic allegiance. Loyalty to constituted authority is the brightest jewel in the Catholic crown; one that Catholics will never surrender. \* \* \* For the Church is the mother of loyalty. She sanctifies authority and so makes allegiance holy."

The death of good Father Stack, January 17, 1895, bowed down in sorrow the community of Saint Patrick. He had truly been to them a father and a guide. He was succeeded by the Rev. John S. Cullen, who soon won a place in the hearts of his people, and ever manifested a thoughtful care for the sisters. The eastern country home for the sisters, advocated by Father Stack, became a reality under Father Cullen, in the acceptance by the council at the mother-house, with the approval of Archbishop Williams, of the estate of Miss Kate Kelly at Waverly.

The foundation at Waverly was made in March, 1898, by Sister Vincent Ferrer Thompson, Sister Vincentia Maguire and Sister M. Agnes Kelly. Father Cullen was called to his reward June 28, 1908. He was succeeded by Monsignor Ambrose F. Roche, who, in 1909, purchased the Townsend estate, on Chestnut Street, as a new home for the sisters.

Monsignor Roche presented the sisters with two cows and hired a man to care for the stock and cultivate the garden. Thus the community has the comforts of country life combined with those of the city.

An addition to the original house was begun in December, 1915, and completed the following spring. The annex included a chapel and two reception rooms on the first floor, while, the second contains modernly equipped sleeping apartments for the sisters. The roof of this floor space makes an excellent roof garden. The chapel, in which the first services were held on March 19, 1916, may fittingly be termed the gift of labor and love of the Rev. Father O'Donnell, curate at Saint Patrick, and one of the truest friends the community has ever possessed. It would appear that in all his parish duties, the sisters came first, and nothing was long wanting for their comfort and happiness which it was in his power to secure. The furnishings of the chapel were largely supplied by him and remain a lasting monument to his ardent love for the dwelling-place of God, and his friendship for the sisters.

Monsignor William O'Brien, rector of Saint Michael Church, Lowell, Massachusetts, next called for Sisters of Saint Dominic. In the fall of 1889, Sister Mary Raymond Bird, superior; Sister Alexia O'Sullivan, Sister Sybillina Clements and Sister Clara Simms made the second Dominican foundation in the East, at Lowell. A month later they were joined by Sister Mary Lawrence Blandford. A new school was waiting for them, but the steady growth

of pupils made it necessary to convert the hall on the third floor into classrooms. Later, three new rooms were added. Success has attended Saint Michael School from the beginning. In the thirty-two years of its existence it has sent forth a long line of graduates, who have attained distinction in their respective positions, and who reflect credit on the school. Sister Alexia O'Sullivan gave many fruitful years of service to this school and under her able management, and with the splendid co-operation of the Reverends J. J. Shaw and Francis Mullen, rapid progress was made. Under the present superior, Sister M. William Whelan, a niece of Monsignor O'Brien, the school is doing excellent work.

Charlestown next received the Sisters of Saint Dominic, and Bunker Hill became their home. Attracted by the success of the schools at Watertown and Lowell, the Rev. James N. Supple, pastor of Saint Francis de Sales Church, applied to the mother-house for a corps of teachers. A site had been purchased in 1888, at a cost of \$11,000 and on the very summit of Bunker Hill gradually rose the handsome new school. Here in September, 1891, Sister M. Vincent Nichols, superior; Sister Francis Slinger, Sister Dominica Lanigan, Sister Magdalen Norton, Sister Bridget Connelly, Sister Agnes Shanahan, Sister Cecelia Kennedy, and Sister Ceslaus McIntyre began their work of Christian education. A convent and chapel for the sisters were later built, and solemnly blessed March 17, 1902, by the Rt. Rev.

John Brady, assisted by the Rev. J. N. Supple and the Rev. Louis Walsh, now bishop of Portland, Maine. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Garret J. Barry.

From the day they entered his parish until his widely-mourned death August 31, 1918, the sisters ever found a true friend in Father Supple. This faithful ambassador of Christ regarded them as his co-laborers in the great work of the Blessed Master and considered nothing burdensome that concerned their happiness and well being. He was an inspiring influence in their work, and in response to it the school has achieved unusual success. It had in its development the assistance of such recognized teachers, as Sister Francesca Kearney, now mother general of the community. Among the many others who have given their best efforts to the perpetuation of the work of the pioneer sisters, may be mentioned Sister M. Thomas O'Leary and Sister Mary Joseph Clarke.

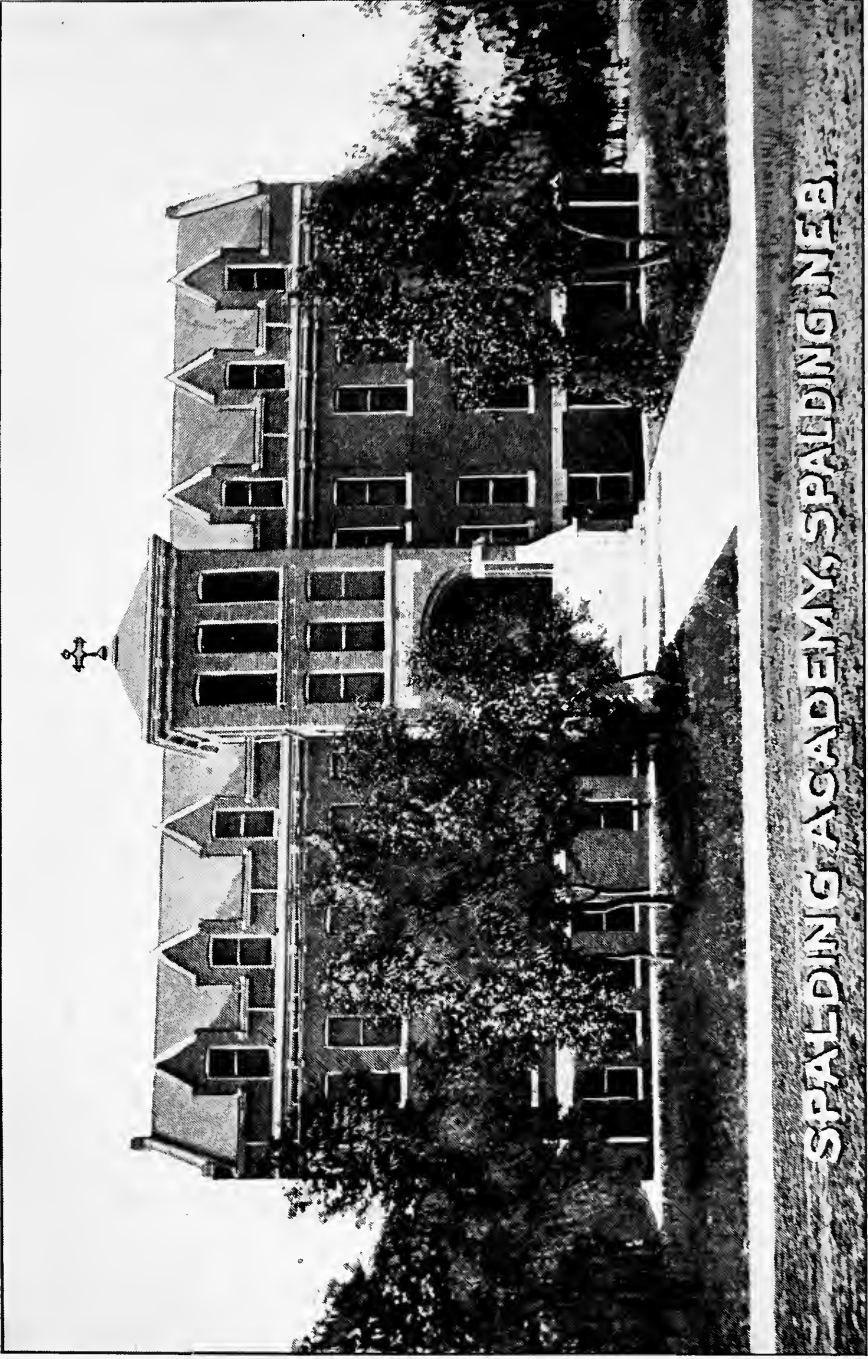
In October, 1918, the Rev. Thomas J. McCormack was appointed successor to Father Supple, and happily remains to continue the good work of his predecessor. Another friend of the sisters was the Rev. Michael Supple, who made his home with his reverend brother. His priestly life of forty-six years was spent in Charlestown, and his death was mourned by the entire city.

As early as 1890, Father Stack had suggested the opening of a branch novitiate in the East, the homestead of Miss Catharine Kelly of Waverly,

which had been bequeathed to him, to be used for that purpose. But the project was not confirmed by the council of Saint Catharine, and the property, as we have seen, was turned over to the sisters as a summer home. Here, later, the academy of Saint Dominic, for boarders and day pupils, was opened. In 1914, the academy was improved at a cost of eight thousand dollars, and in the fall of 1917 a school for boys was opened, over which Sister Louise Robertson presides.

On August 28, 1913, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the entrance of the Dominican Sisters into the New England States was fittingly observed at Saint Patrick Church, Watertown. About one hundred sisters attached to the various Dominican schools in the East, assembled there to celebrate the event. The church was elaborately decorated in honor of the occasion. High Mass was sung by the pastor, Rt. Rev. Msgr. Roche, while the Revs. John F. Kelleher and Richard H. Splaine occupied seats in the sanctuary. The sermon was preached by Monsignor Roche, who thanked the sisters on behalf of the parish for their faithful service, and congratulated them on the glorious results attained during the twenty-five years of their establishment.

It would appear from the success attending Saint Catharine through her missions in New England, that the East was destined to witness the concentration of her efforts, at least for some time. Instead, however, there came a western expansion that gives promise of even greater development for the Order.



SPALDING ACADEMY, SPALDING, NEB.

SPALDING ACADEMY, SPALDING, NEBRASKA





The town of Spalding, in the diocese of Omaha, is the center of a rich agricultural district of Nebraska. The Church had followed the first settlers, and in time the Sisters of Mercy were brought to teach the school. Here also the Third Order Regulars of Franciscans opened a school for boys. In 1901, the Sisters of Mercy were withdrawn by the mother-house. In seeking successors to them, the pastor, the Rev. J. E. De Vos, sought advice from the Rev. H. S. Spalding, S. J., of Creighton University. Three sisters of Father Spalding are members of the Congregation of Saint Catharine of Sienna; Sisters Bernard, Rose and Dolores Spalding, while a fourth, Sister Josephine Spalding, after her profession, had withdrawn to enter the Second Order of the Dominicans at Hunts Point, New York. In consequence of this close family connection with the Kentucky Dominicans, Father Spalding was familiar with their work and he advised Father DeVos to apply to Saint Catharine for teachers for his school. Father Spalding strengthened the application by a personal appeal to Mother Agnes Hunt to accept the new mission, as it would be to the advantage of the Order as well as to the good of the Church. Mother Agnes had no greater desire than to extend the work of Christ to which her Order is vowed. Heeding this appeal from the West, she sent Sister Raphael Huber and Sister Margaret Hamilton to open the mission. They left the mother-house in August, 1901, and in due time reached their new home.

Even at the beginning of the new century, poverty, the old familiar companion of the sisters since

pioneer days, met the Dominicans in their latest undertaking. As they were not expected so soon, their convent was without even the necessary supplies. However, the religious life is one of adaptability, and the two sisters had learned to put up with inconveniences. They were joined within the week by Sister Borgia McCann and Sister Dolores Spalding, and the little community began to make ready for the opening of school. The outlook was gloomy. Father DeVos had gone to Belgium, where he had been detained longer than he expected, and the acting pastor, the Rev. Father McCarthy, did not feel that he had the authority to order the furniture and supplies for the school.

Nothing daunted, however, the sisters resolved that classes would open at the appointed time. Seats were provided by carrying pews from the church, on the promise that they would be returned in time for services on the following Sunday. In this strenuous task, as in many another those trying days presented, the sisters were assisted by the good sexton, Mr. M. Gilson. The improvised classrooms were ready, and the first Monday in September found the sisters awaiting their pupils. Seven presented themselves. The beginning was not auspicious, and if the sisters, strangers in a strange land, and lacking even the ordinary comforts of life, found their spirits drooping, none can wonder. But the seven children must have spread about a good report of the new sisters, for their number increased so rapidly that another teacher was required, and in

November, Sister Francis O'Mahony and Sister Rosalia O'Daniel were sent to Spalding, the latter for her health. In addition to their work at the academy, which was placed under the patronage of Our Lady of Lourdes, the sisters undertook the parochial school, which they still teach.

The return of Father DeVos naturally helped to improve the situation, and as the people of the town and country became acquainted with the sisters, a community of interests was established, friendships were formed, which the passage of time strengthened. But those first years in the Nebraska town of that period brought their own trials to those pioneers of Dominicanism in the West; and while none of the glamor which the time and the circumstance have woven into the story of the foundation of Saint Catharine enfolds it, still may the beginning at Spalding carry its own unrevealed poignancy, its own unrecorded heroism.

The future of the Order in the state was soon manifest, and the sisters were prepared to meet its requirements. The academy's progress was rapid. In 1905 it was accredited to the State University, being one of the first schools to ask for accreditation. At the same time a normal training class was opened. This department continues to do excellent work, and has given many efficient teachers to the Order as well as to the state of Nebraska. The following is from the Spalding paper of that time:

Mr. W. M. Whelan, who conducted the summer school here for the sisters during June and July and who is now employed

as an instructor in the high school at Lincoln, spent Saturday and Sunday in Spalding. The new educational law provides that high schools that are accredited to the State University may adopt the new normal training, the curriculum of which has been fixed by the State Superintendent and may give their pupils and graduates the benefit of this training, and that is done by adopting the methods prescribed and obtaining the approval of the State Superintendent. The sisters have at all times made it a rule to keep abreast of modern advancement and to give their pupils the same and better benefits than they can derive in the first class schools of the country. For this purpose they desired to consult with Professor Whelan with reference to the matter, he being a recognized authority upon everything pertaining to educational work. While here, the course of study was arranged and the approval of the State Superintendent's office will be expected to follow. The sisters are certainly to be commended for the progressive spirit with which they control this educational institution. From its very inception they have shown a disposition to place the academy upon a high plane, and that they have done so is proven by their work. We might repeat here that the people of this community do not realize the strength of this institution and the high estimation in which it is held by people familiar with matters of this kind.

The students of the summer classes at the University of Nebraska during 1904 and 1905, must have been surprised to find the white-robed Dominican nuns in attendance. Sister Margaret Hamilton and Sister Bernard Spalding entered the regular classes of the University, being the first sister-students ever enrolled there. In addition to this, since 1906, summer sessions for its teachers are held at the academy, and some of the leading educators are engaged to conduct the work in their special departments. To bring the academy to a place beyond the criticism of even the most captious, is the aim of the sisters, and the recognition the school receives, proves the realization of their laudable ambition.

The academy graduated its first students in 1906, in Miss Anna Burchill and Miss Mary Leonard, now Sister Marie, O. S. D. Great good is accomplished by its students, who engage in teaching the district schools. As most of these districts are entirely Catholic, the children are also instructed in Christian doctrine. Where the condition is otherwise, the Catholic teacher instructs the Catholic children after school hours; thus the loss of faith is lessened in those rural districts.

Among other sisters who have labored in building up and maintaining the schools at Spalding, are Sister M. Rose Spalding, Sister M. Louis Logsdon, Sister Clara Simms, Sister Lucy Spalding, Sister Bonaventure Peake and Sister Rosalia O'Daniel, a sister of the Rev. Victor F. O'Daniel, O. P., the well known author. But none deserves higher praise than the present able staff, Sister M. Clement Tynan, Sister Ambrose Deppen, Sister Concilia Bohan, Sister Bernard Dwyer and Sister Stanislaus O'Brien. Still another name deserving an honored place on the roll of Spalding's teachers, is Sister Marie Welsh, who developed heart disease during her labors there. Her life had been one of deep piety and obedience. Such were her virtues that Father Galvin, the pastor of Spalding, spoke her eulogy in these words:

"She was nearer to the Divine Model than anyone I have known. The building into our religious institutions of such lives as hers, gives to them their enduring quality and ennobling character. Long after their mortal part has been resolved by

mother earth, their work lives on, for in raising these consecrated monuments they first consecrated in themselves the most beautiful monument of gentleness and justice and benevolence."

The full development of the academy at Spalding was, however, impeded by the parochial ownership of the property. The society of Saint Catharine could not improve a place not its own, and the parish did not feel it a duty to build up the private enterprise of the sisters. Any money used in this direction had to be secured by the faculty by means of entertainments or by appeal to the generosity of friends. Father DeVos had been succeeded in the pastorate of Saint Michael Church by the Rev. B. F. Galvin, who, with his assistant, the Rev. M. L. Daly, ever evinced deep interest in the success of the sisters. To insure this success and to enable the school to acquire a home necessary for its development, Father Galvin expressed his readiness to turn over the property to the Congregation. Accordingly, Sister Vincent Ferrer was sent to Spalding, in the spring of 1911, to inspect the property. On her recommendation, it was accepted by the society, and plans for a new academy were drawn up by Mr. Nachtigall of Omaha. Early in 1912, the work was begun. The sisters opened a drive for funds and about five thousand dollars was collected. On June 5, the cornerstone was laid by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Tihen, and in March, 1913, the sisters took possession of their new home, which, strictly modern, is one of the ornaments of Spalding.

## CHAPTER XV

### Improvements and Other Events at the Mother-House.

From afar, in peaceful Sienna Vale, Saint Catharine watched over her ever-increasing foundations and with a true mother's heart felt for them in their vicissitudes, rejoiced with them in their successes. The high degree of excellence the schools were attaining had their impetus in the governing body, which set a lofty standard for the work of the Order. Every opportunity in keeping with the religious life for the advancement of the teachers was seized; summer schools were conducted in various centers for them and courses at universities permitted. While the growth of the novitiate, largely recruited from the sisters' own schools, was not meeting the demands made upon Saint Catharine for teachers, still it annually sent out bands of eager young women, trained after Dominican ideals and fitted by nature and grace for their profession.

Mother Regina's last term was marked by the erection of the new convent. The enlargement of the work of the community made new quarters necessary and in 1889 the old convent with its long train of association was torn down to give place to a new and stately building with modern improvements. During the erection of the new convent many sacrifices were made by the sisters, especially by the

old and infirm. There were no luxuries and few comforts. The attic and every available space had to be occupied, but the steady progress of the new building made these sacrifices and trials easy to bear. The sisters took possession of the convent even before it was finished, so urgent was the need of room. When it was finally completed, it was blessed with great ceremony by the chaplain. It was a three-story brick building. The first floor contained the infirmary chapel, community room, hall, sisters' refectory, serving rooms, priest's dining room and superior's office known as mother's room. The second floor comprised the novitiate recreation room, music and class rooms and dormitories. The third floor was given up entirely to sleeping apartments. The completion of this building was a great joy to the community as it gave many comforts to the old sisters who had made so many sacrifices for the good of the society.

Sister Vincent Ferrer succeeded Mother Regina as prioress in the summer of 1891 and was re-elected in 1894. The new superior came well equipped for the important work before her. She had successfully labored at Holy Rosary Academy, Louisville, and Saint Patrick School, Watertown, Massachusetts. She knew from her own experience the educational situation, and visioned the future with its wider possibilities and harder requirements.

One of her first acts was the opening of Saint Francis de Sales School, in Charlestown, Massachusetts, of whose foundation and success we have already written. Holy Rosary Academy in Louisville



then demanded attention. Railroads and industries had caused the property to deteriorate, and the school suffered in consequence, causing it to be closed in 1894. Two years later the property was sold, having been used in the meantime as a home for the sisters who taught in Saint Louis Bertrand School. In May, 1897, Mother Vincent bought the building at 412 West Ormsby Avenue and the school was re-opened in September. But this building proved inadequate and as there was no space for an addition, two houses were afterwards purchased at Fourth and Park Avenues. At the rear of these the present school, facing Park Avenue, was erected. It contains a spacious auditorium, gymnasium, class and music rooms.

Mother Vincent also opened, in 1895, at the request of the pastor, the Rev. Father Ducey, a parochial school at Effingham, Illinois. Sister Raymunda Meagher, Sister Thomasina Gilmartin, Sister Margaret Hamilton and Sister Ambrose Deppen were sent to the mission. A cordial welcome was given them by both pastor and people. Until the sisters' convent was ready, Father Ducey took up his residence at the hotel and gave the sisters the use of the rectory. The school did good work for several years, but on account of the demand for sisters for the larger missions, Effingham was closed.

The academy of Saint Catharine, under the supervision of Sister M. Benven and her able corps of instructors grew and gained favor with the people.

Sister M. Benven had the gift of interesting young minds in serious subjects, of awakening in them a desire to know that which they ordinarily regarded as dull and profitless. Better than this, she had the power to urge them to follow an honorable course of conduct. With all her earnestness about the pupils' intellectual progress, and zeal regarding their spiritual advancement, she was so kind, so human in her consideration of their youthful love of good things and good times, that she was ever devising something to recreate and amuse them. Little wonder that it became necessary to build in order to accommodate the students who applied for admission. Mother Vincent Ferrer, with the aid of her council and the architect, planned and brought to completion the beautiful and imposing academy finished during her first term of office 1891 to 1894. This building was the pride of the sisters. On the first floor were the sodality oratory, class rooms, study-hall, store-room, book room and recreation hall. The second floor was taken up with commencement hall, music rooms and art rooms. On the third floor were the dormitories, wardrobe and lavatories. Everything was prospering: material advancement had been steady, educational progress had been rapid, spiritual advantages had been many and fruitful.

On Friday, April 30, 1897, Saint Catharine celebrated the diamond jubilee of her foundation. Solemn religious services were held in the morning, and in the afternoon a dramatic entertainment was given by the pupils. Many friends assembled to

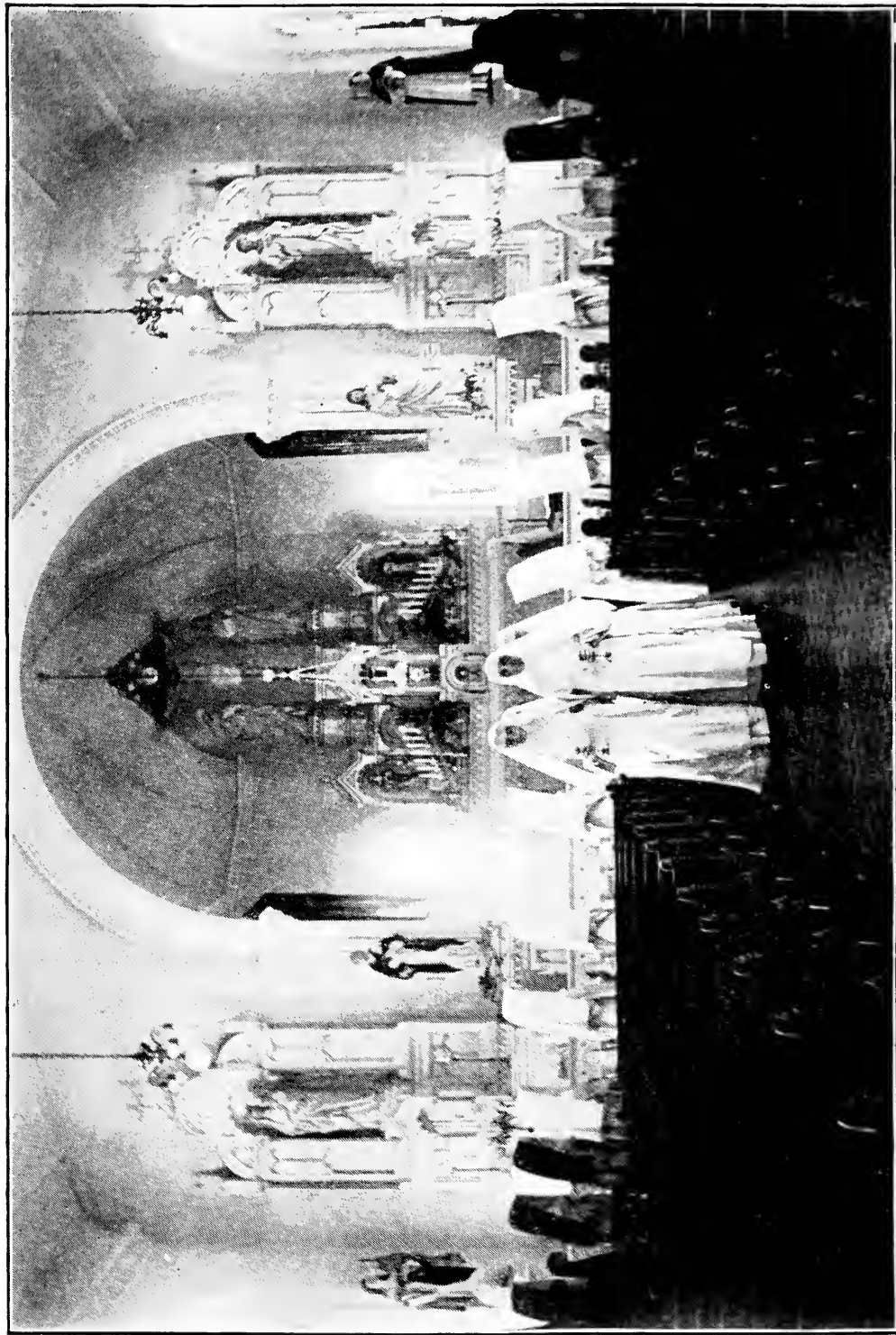
show by their presence their love and veneration for the historic institution. Mother Vincent permitted all the sisters on the missions to come home that summer. A special train was chartered to bring the sisters from the East. They numbered forty-five and their home-coming was made memorable. Lights greeted them from every window of Saint Catharine on the night of their arrival, while the convent bells pealed forth glad welcome. Near by was the colored orchestra playing "Home, Sweet Home." For a month the sisters held glad jubilee in honor of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the foundation of their Congregation.

An event fraught with keenest sorrow for every member of the society occurred at this period—the withdrawal in May, 1892, of the Dominican Fathers of Saint Rose from the chaplaincy of Saint Catharine, following the appointment by Bishop McCloskey of the Rev. C. J. O'Connell of Bardstown, as confessor of the sisters. Throughout the seventy years of their existence, the sisters had looked to Saint Rose for spiritual guidance and advice on all their concerns, certain of the strength of the fraternal bond uniting the two communities. After having several temporary chaplains, the Rev. Peter DeFraine was assigned to Saint Catharine and served with fidelity until his death, April 14, 1902. In 1903, the Fathers of Saint Rose again assumed the office of chaplain, which they happily continue to the present time.

Another event of this period was one of those situations which the sisters not only had no part in

creating, but whose final settlement they accepted only through obedience, as they realized the retarding effect it was bound to exercise on the free development of their work. Since 1869, the sisters had been striving to get a Rule similar to the one approved by Rome for the sisters of Saint Dominic of Stone, England. But this plan did not meet with the approval of Bishop McCloskey as he wished a diocesan community, independent of any authority, save his own. Many of the sisters were unwilling to accede to this arrangement and petitioned that the manuscript Rule, drawn up by the Rev. Thomas Wilson and approved by His Holiness, Pius VII, should be revised and added to by the Holy See so as to meet the changes and vicissitudes of time and place. The life of any community does not always run smoothly. There must be an interchange of light and shade. The sisters complied with the bishop's wishes and accepted the rule. On the morning of April 3, 1895, Monsignor Sabarretti, Secretary of the Apostolic Delegation at Washington, read before the assembled sisters, the letter and decree issued by Archbishop Satolli, the Apostolic Delegate.

At the close of Mother Vincent Ferrer's second term of office, July 25, 1897, Sister Bernardine Bushue was elected prioress. Like her predecessor, Mother Bernardine had been a successful teacher, and had aided in the establishment of the eastern missions. She at once set about beautifying the chapel, convent and grounds. The beautiful statue of the Sacred Heart with outstretched arms at the



"SALVE" PROCESSION, CHAPEL 1922



front entrance to Saint Catharine, is a monument to her devotion and zeal.

But into this vigorous life which the society was experiencing, with its far-reaching possibilities of advancement, crept days fraught with heavy sorrow as one by one those valiant women who had spent themselves for it, in high places or in humble, at home or on the missions, were summoned from their post with the living for the low green roof which all, at last, must seek. Some were called in the midst of their labors, others when the work had fallen from their age-enfeebled hands; but early or late, the coming of the bridegroom found them waiting with trimmed lamps burning.

One of those whose death was deeply deplored was Sister Dolores Mattingly who died June 19, 1889, after a brief illness. A few days before, she had made an offering of her life to God for the salvation of a soul. The sacrifice was accepted. On the morning of June 19, she complained of a severe pain in her head; that night she died in her cell, having refused to quit it for the infirmary. She was Mother Regina's secretary and all her letters and documents were found in perfect order, as were her cell and classroom. Her death was a blow to the community, but a soul was saved to God.

No loss brought heavier sorrow to Sienna Vale than that occasioned by the death of Sister Regina O'Meara, which occurred at Saint Agnes Academy, Memphis, March 19, 1900. Sister Regina was one of the great builders of the Congregation. Six

times called to the office of prioress, she discharged her duties with wisdom and foresight. She builded nobly on the foundation laid by her predecessors and rejoiced in the wide extension of her Order. Animated by the spirit of its saintly founder, she lived solely for God and the fulfillment of His will toward her. In the morning of youth she had consecrated herself to Him, turning from a world that had much to offer. Her life had been holy and her death was truly the death that is promised to the just. It is related by those in attendance at her side, that a few minutes before her dissolution, her countenance and the room itself, was filled with a light not of earth. It continued until, with an aspiration on her lips, Sister Regina set forth with her heavenly companions.

Another member who had served the community long and well, and was, so to speak, the last link between the pioneer convent of Saint Mary Magdalen and the flourishing institution of Saint Catharine, was Sister Angela Lynch who died November 23, 1901. Four sisters had entered religion leaving her alone at home. She, too, sought the life of perfection and was received into the community of the Dominicans of Saint Mary Magdalen, then struggling for existence. Undaunted by the hardships she and her companions had to endure, she persevered and made her profession. In the course of time, she was elected prioress of the community and, as we have seen, admirably filled the office, leaving as her monument the beautiful chapel she had caused to be



built. An artist of no ordinary talent, she wisely employed her gift, and her paintings reflected the beauty in which the pure of soul have their abiding place. She bore the infirmities of age and her last illness with patience and beautiful resignation.

Still another name associated with the past, whose bearer was summoned to join the white-robed band that follow the Lamb, was that of Sister Hyacintha Reed who died March 22, 1901. Born in 1836, she came to Saint Mary Magdalen when a small child. Of her it was said: "She possessed in rare abundance the admirable and desirable virtues of extreme gentleness, generous charity and deep humility."

Another whose passing was deservedly mourned was Sister Augusta Thomas. Her death occurred March 11, 1898. Sister Augusta made her profession as a Dominican nun, November 4, 1860, and through the years that followed, her piety and faithful labors endeared her to her community. She possessed the virtues of simplicity, prayer and industry in an eminent degree. The commands of her superiors were never questioned, but obeyed. Her gaiety and simplicity during the regular recreation hours were the delight of the community. She had charge of the bake-house, dairy and poultry yard, each a duty in itself, yet her hours of leisure were always spent in the chapel, wrapt in prayer at our Lord's feet. She was most exact in the observance of silence and, while her work permitted her to talk when necessary, she

never grew lax in this, or any other observance of the Rule. She was sincerely devoted to the society and offered all her manual labor for its welfare.

## CHAPTER XVI

### The Fire

The opening years of the new century carried with them, as we have seen, great blessings for the Dominican Sisters in Kentucky. The western missions with their far-reaching possibilities had been founded; the eastern schools had been increased; the southern houses improved. Sister Agnes Hunt had been elected prioress in the summer of 1900, and was re-elected in 1903.

Mother Agnes was a native of Ireland and was brought to this country when very young. From early years she had manifested an inclination to piety, which prompted her later to desire to consecrate herself to God. Following the advice given to her by one of the Dominican Fathers of New York City, she entered the novitiate of Saint Catharine and was clothed with the habit, March 25, 1872, making her profession the following year. She served her Order with fidelity in several of its houses. The traits of her lovable character made a deep impression upon those with whom she lived, and her elevation to the office of prioress gave satisfaction to all. She entered on her second term of office sustained by the knowledge that her first administration had been fruitful and she looked hopefully to the future. In 1903, Mother Agnes succeeded in getting the Post Office Department to establish an

office at Saint Catharine, Kentucky. Sister Francis O'Malley is the present able incumbent, with Sister Leona Ferriell as assistant.

The year 1904 dawned auspiciously. The happy Christmas holidays were drawing to a close, and the pupils were returning to Saint Catharine to resume their studies. Always do we wonder why the day that is to bring us our crushing blow carries with it no premonition, gives no warning signal. Yet of all those who looked over Sienna Vale on that fateful January third, none felt the shadow of impending disaster. The duties that busy day were discharged, and then each sought her well-earned rest, prayerfully anticipating the morrow. But no morrow ever dawned for Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent. When day broke it showed fire-blackened walls, a pile of ashes and debris—all that remained of that splendid institution of piety and learning, which the rays of yesterday's setting sun had illumined. Out of the overwhelming tragedy one consoling fact stood forth—there had been no loss of life.

The unseen side of events baffles all calculations. Sleep had fallen upon the doomed house, but there was one who was not asleep. Miss Mary Curry, a member of the graduating class, was restless and wakeful. Some trifle of her uneventful day, probably, had remained with her in the dormitory of the third floor of the academy and had driven sleep away. The clock struck eleven. There was no sound within, save the deep breathing of her companions;

outside, only the noise made by the ice-mailed trees bending before the wind, or the bark of a watchdog.

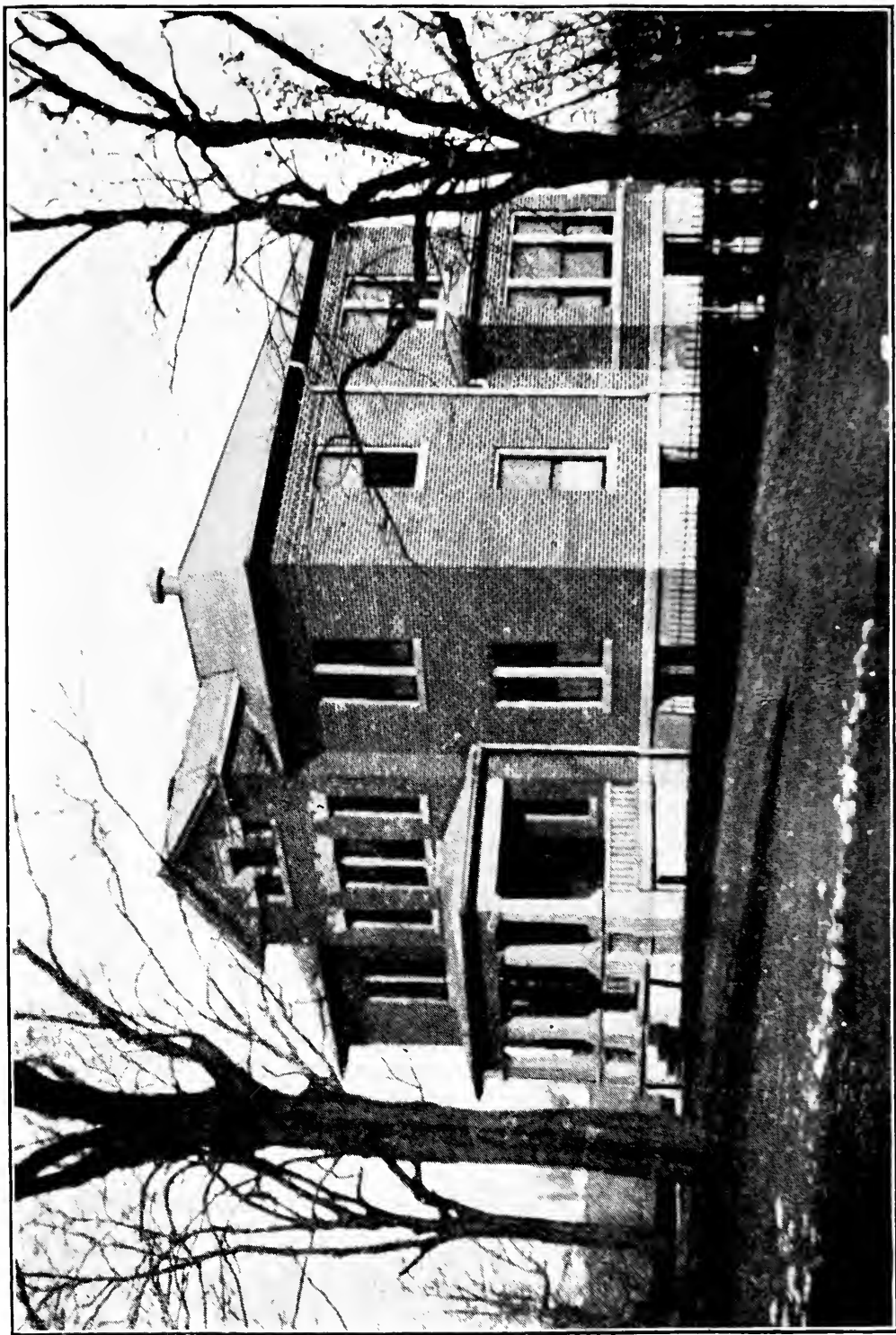
She thought she smelled smoke. She rose quickly and taking her crutches—she had been a cripple from infancy—went out to the corridor to investigate. What met her would have appalled one stronger than this frail girl—smoke, blinding, smarting smoke; intense heat; and the terrible sound of crackling flames! As quickly as she could, she went to another dormitory where a sister slept with the children, and called her, with her message of terror.

The sister was on her feet in an instant. Now the smoke was pouring into the dormitory while the roar of the fire was plainly heard. It was directly under them and the horror of the situation broke agonizingly upon the nun. The entire floor might be about to drop into that seething sea of flames, for aught she knew. Dressing as she went, she called the other sisters sleeping in the children's dormitories. The children! These children entrusted to the sisters by confiding parents! That was the one thought. Self was forgotten, though the heat was clutching them with its cruel hand and the smoke was blinding them. From bed to bed they flew, rousing the older girls, dragging out the younger, until all were awakened; then, with blankets wrapped around them, they were led out of the sleeping apartments to the infirmary. As all the children had not returned, the sisters were uncertain if they had res-

cued all. They ran back to the dormitories, now ready to burst into flame, and going again from bed to bed, they passed their hands over each one to make sure no sleeper had escaped their vigilance. This was repeated, while other sisters with lamps, searched the rooms. When no doubt remained in the minds of the sisters, they then made their escape as best they could. Sister Bernard Fogarty, the last to leave, found herself hemmed in by the fire. She was obliged to break a window in the corridor, climb out on the roof of the old convent building, walk along the icy shingles to the new convent, a distance of seventy feet, break through another window, and thus make her escape. A few minutes after the sisters left the dormitory section, it was aflame.

Let us pause here and pay our tribute to the heroism of these women, who, flinging aside fear for their own safety, gave first thought to their pupils. They justified by their conduct the confidence that had been reposed in them; they upheld the traditions of the religious life and exemplified anew the sacrificial spirit of their sex.

In the meantime, the alarm of the peril had spread to the other parts of the institution. One of the graduates, Miss Loretta Tighe, with rare presence of mind, on springing from her bed had seized the bell-rope in the academy, and its voice of disaster roused the nuns and novices in the convent building. Someone then began to ring the convent bell and the neighbors were awakened as its wild clanging broke



RECTORY AND GUEST HOUSE BUILT IN 1918





over the midnight silence of the great country. Hurrying out of the doors, their eyes instinctively turned toward Saint Catharine, and they immediately read the direful message of the bell in the fiery sky.

Telephones carried the news to Springfield, and the citizens of the town poured out to help the more immediate neighbors. The fathers from Saint Rose were the first to arrive. They found the pupils in the infirmary saying the Rosary, while the sisters were making an effort to save some things from the academy. It was only too evident that the entire establishment was doomed as the fire had been beyond control even when first discovered. With crushed hearts, the community were forced to stand by and witness the destruction of what had been built by the toil and sacrifice of eighty-two years; and more than one eye sought the graveyard nearby, where the white tombstones of those others who had spent themselves in that labor, gleamed like pleading hands in the crimson light.

But human effort to save was powerless; it could only give protection to those left homeless in a winter midnight. The Very Rev. Father Larpenteur, prior of Saint Rose, offered the shelter of that convent to the sisters and their pupils. Willing hands hitched horses to carriages, and trip after trip was made, through the piercing cold, until the children and nuns were safely housed. The big kitchen, spacious parlors and dining halls of Saint Rose were thrown

open, and huge fires were built for the half-frozen refugees. So quickly and perfectly was the arrangement for the transportation made, that few were obliged to walk to Saint Rose, and the smaller children were even carried from the infirmary to the waiting vehicles. Citizens from Springfield also offered the hospitality of their homes to the pupils, and many were cared for in that way.

Father Larpenteur deserves much praise, not only for throwing open his house to the sufferers and providing so thoroughly for their relief, but also for the way in which he labored carrying children from the burning building, warning the sisters back from dangerous points, and saving articles of value from the chapel. The other fathers and brothers who labored with him also merit lasting gratitude for their coolness, quickness and tireless energy.

Soon after the children had left the infirmary the flames destroyed the old convent and then spread to the new addition. Within an hour, the magnificent group of buildings was a mass of fire. The beautiful facade, four hundred feet in length, flanked on one side by the symmetrical Gothic chapel, on the other by the new exhibition hall, became a wall of flame whose heat was so intense that none could venture near. Soon the roof fell in, the walls toppled over, nothing remained standing but the corners of the structure, piles of brick work that the fire could not conquer. The ruins burned quite freely until daylight, then

the fire died out and everything pertaining to the superb institution had vanished with it, except some bedding, a few books, and some other articles of slight value. Some of the important papers and documents had fortunately been saved and were turned over to Mother Agnes.

When it was no longer possible to save anything from the burning building, the sisters and novices went to Saint Rose, some on foot, others in the many carriages that had gathered about the conflagration. There the sisters found the children clothed in warm wrappings and drinking hot coffee, both of which had been procured through the kindness of the fathers. The conduct of the pupils during the ordeal was praiseworthy, and through it all they endeavored to cheer one another following the example presented them by their teachers. The children remained at Saint Rose until early Sunday morning, when all were given over to the care of prominent citizens who generously offered to shelter and clothe them. Mr. John Barber, Dr. Robards, Mr. Schultze, Mr. Charles McIntyre and scores of others distinguished themselves by their zeal in caring for the suffering pupils. Many of the sisters also found refuge in private homes. Four sick sisters were removed to Saint Rose, where every attention was given them until Sunday afternoon when they were taken to Nazareth, under the direction of Mr. Tom Spalding of Bardstown, who has ever been a devoted and generous friend to the community.

The cause of the fire is unknown. It started in the basement of the academy building, near the ex-

treme western corner. There was in the basement a kiln for baking painted china which had been used for twelve years without accident. This kiln, heated by gasoline, supplied by a tank buried thirty feet in the ground outside the building, had been in use that fatal Saturday afternoon, but when the art teacher left it at four o'clock it was cold and there was no sign of fire about the place. There was nothing of an inflammable nature kept in this basement, and therefore the cause of the fire will always remain a conjecture.

The loss was appalling. The work of eighty-two years lay in ashes. The institution carried an insurance of \$75,000, but that was small against the \$350,000 which it represented, and even much of this insurance had to go to pay the debt which had been contracted for extensive improvements during the past year. But the loss of the buildings was not the heaviest the fire entailed. They could be replaced while there were other losses that were irreparable. One of these was the destruction of the records and papers pertaining to the history of the Congregation. There had perished, too, the valuable library containing several thousand volumes. Priceless paintings and statuary, gifts to the community from patrons and friends, were also lost. But the most poignant sorrow was for their lost home. That venerable roof had sheltered many of the sisters, as pupils and as religious; there were some who had never left it, from the hour they had entered as postulants, and in every mission house of the Congrega-

tion there were hearts to be smitten when that night's story should be told.

But fate, as if feeling a twinge for the ruin she had wrought, left unharmed the brick laundry and the chaplain's cottage, a frame structure of four rooms. When morning broke, back to these came the unconquered Mother Agnes with twelve sisters and the novices. The Rule requires that the novices shall spend their year of probation in one place and rather than break up their term, these young aspirants chose to endure the suffering and privations of these cramped quarters. Against such a spirit, the blackest misfortune is powerless. The fathers of Saint Rose, never truer in their long years of friendship than in this hour, gave furniture for the rooms from their own convent, spending the entire day in moving the furniture, putting up stoves and carrying supplies. They were ably assisted by the overseer of Saint Catharine, Mr. Harry Smith, and Mr. John Corbet.

The hour of trial, besides proving our own souls, proves the affection of our friends. As the news of the destruction of Saint Catharine spread, from far and near came expressions of sympathy and offers of assistance. The day following the fire, Sunday, the Dominican Fathers of Saint Louis Bertrand Church, Louisville, called the attention of the congregation to the calamity which had befallen Saint Catharine Convent. A meeting of the men of the parish was held after the nine o'clock Mass. No argument or appeal

was needed to show those present the necessity of action, and an organization was perfected without delay. Hon. Edward J. McDermott was chosen chairman; Mr. Ben. J. Imorde, vice chairman; Mr. Frank McDonough, secretary; and Mr. M. J. Walsh, treasurer. It was deemed advisable to send a relief train the following morning to Springfield to carry provisions and clothing to the unfortunate sisters and children and to bring them to Louisville. The Relief Committee called on Trainmaster R. C. Morrison of the Louisville and Nashville Railway and when the case was stated to President Smith, the latter at once ordered that a special train be placed at the disposal of the committee, free of charge.

In order to reach members of the congregation who were not at the meeting, the collectors of the Parish Debt Paying Association made a canvass of their districts during the afternoon. In the meantime the women were not idle. They met after vespers and appointed a committee of six to accompany the special train, to distribute the clothing and assist the sisters with their charges. As a result of the day's activity, eleven hundred dollars were raised. In addition the men had secured transportation and other service for the sisters. Catholic undertakers and transfer companies offered to provide carriages to meet the refugees on reaching the city, while several physicans volunteered their services.

The full extent of the disaster to Saint Catharine was realized by the sorrowing friends in Louisville when, on Monday afternoon, the special train ar-

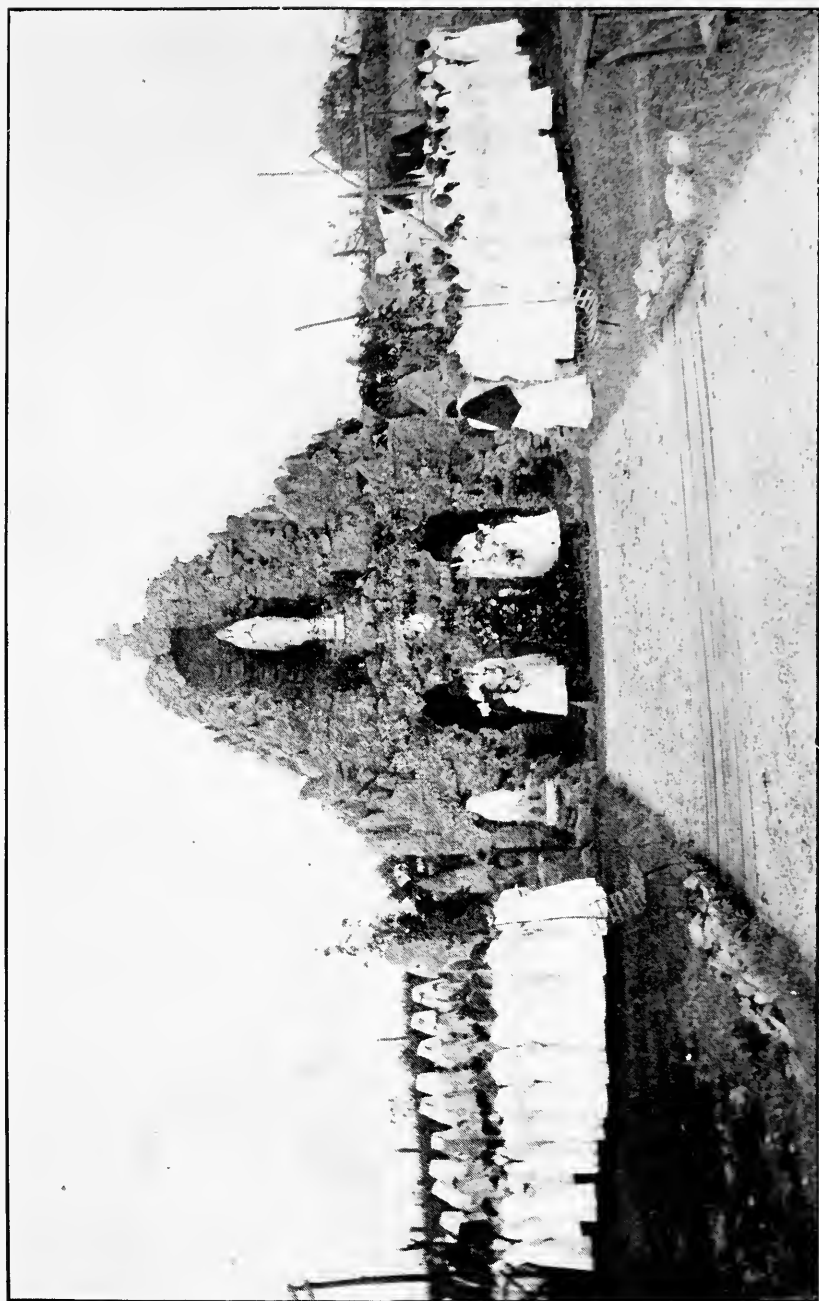
rived at the Union Station. Among the sisters were three sick unto death. As they were carried to the ambulances, their pale faces illumined by a light not of earth, many a tear fell in sympathy, while the sad picture of the children moistened every eye. Clad in ill-fitting garments, their countenances telling the fright and cold and suffering endured during the past twenty-four hours, they presented a woeful spectacle as they followed the sisters to the carriages which conveyed them to Holy Rosary Academy, where they were permitted to continue their course. The eight graduates of that memorable year of Saint Catharine, were Misses Mary McHugh, Louise Ware, Gertrude Purcell, Mary Curry, Loretta Tighe, Gertrude Stoker, Nellie Barr and Helen Acosta. The sick sisters were taken to Saint Mary and Elizabeth Hospital, where they were cared for by the Sisters of Nazareth.

As it was not possible for Saint Louis Bertrand parish to take entire charge of the relief work, and as it was felt that many other citizens of Louisville would wish to co-operate in the movement, a mass meeting was called for Monday night by a committee consisting of Messrs. Daniel E. Doherty, E. J. McDermott, Frank Geher, D. X. Murphy, Matt O'Doherty, J. T. Gaffney, C. A. Curtin, John Cassilly, H. D. Rodman and Dr. J. A. Ouchterlony. The meeting was presided over by Judge Matt O'Doherty, who announced that Governor Beckham had sent an expression of sympathy for the misfortune of the sis-

ters. Over two thousand dollars were collected at the meeting and arrangements were made for a canvass of the city, soliciting donations of money, provisions and clothes. The Alumnae of Saint Catharine also showed their sympathy for their Alma Mater, and contributed toward the fund, which by affording the sisters immediate relief, was doubly a gift. Among the first to render immediate aid to the heavily afflicted community were the superiors of the mother-houses of the Sisters of Loretto and the Sisters of Nazareth. In each house several of the sisters were received until some provision for their return to Saint Catharine could be made. Truly might Mother Agnes Hunt have thought that she had fallen upon evil days, as the burden pressed hard upon her soul. With a few of the sisters and the novices, she took up her residence in the chaplain's house, as we have seen. Later a temporary building, known as the "paper house" because of its construction out of heavy building paper, was added; and amid the ruins she carried on her duties. For the first time since the founders had opened classes in the old still-house, the work of education had withdrawn from the Vale. The sisters were dispersed among the missions, with the exception of the two bands sent to new schools in East St. Louis, Illinois, and Dennison, Iowa. Both these missions were afterwards closed.

Saint Catharine was to be rebuilt, but where? Sentiment called in most appealing tones for the Vale, or at least that part of the farm facing the





Grotto of Lourdes



Bardstown Pike; the public suggested Springfield; the bishop urged Louisville. So desirous were the citizens of Springfield to have the convent built in or near the town, that they offered to present to the sisters a tract of land for the purpose.

On January 14, a committee consisting of Messrs. Thurman, Barber, McElroy and Cain, waited upon Mother Agnes and urged her to accept the generous offer of the citizens of Springfield. Three locations were offered for her consideration. The first lay on the eastern side of the Bloomfield pike, and was a portion of the former Skidmore place. The second was on the south side of the Bardstown pike, not far from the new reservoir. The third was on the Beechland pike, a beautiful slope on the Palmer Grundy farm. The sisters did not favor any of these locations, but selected instead the Isaac Curry farm, provisionally; but later chose the Simms farm. The land was to be donated in fee simple and free from all incumbrances.

Bishop McCloskey, who had advised Mother Agnes to build the mother-house at Louisville, gave his consent "under protest," as he wrote, to the acceptance of the Curry farm. When he was solicited to permit the acceptance, instead, of the Simms farm, the provisional choice of the Curry farm, as Mother Agnes wrote him, having been made at "a time in which the distress of the sisters was most keenly felt, under circumstances which can readily account for the oversight of some details of importance," he replied that in view of this change of mind on the

part of the community, he would take steps himself to study the matter of the future site for Saint Catharine, lest the second choice might again be objectionable. He then authorized the new convent to be built on Saint Catharine farm, either on the old site in the Vale or on the high ground adjoining the Bardstown and Springfield pike.

The choice of the sisters for a country place for their mother-house and novitiate had good sense on its side, sentiment not considered. There are, of course, certain very desirable features connected with the vicinity of a great city, but even in a lifetime, one may witness the entire change of the character of a neighborhood. Annexation brings property within the city limits; city improvements add to the financial burden; and industries may make the location wholly undesirable. There are magnificent religious institutions to-day suffering from that very desire on the part of their builders to be adjacent to a city, which in even a quarter of a century reached out to them, surrounding them with undesirable neighbors, or planting factories at their gates. To abandon the house, is to suffer severe loss; to continue, is to curtail the growth and usefulness of the institution.

Again by selecting the country, the sisters further insured the health of the novices. In the day when the lack of vocations is voiced on all sides, those who are entering religion deserve every consideration. They have offered themselves to the Lord to carry on His work; and since none can be more precious in

His sight, it behooves those placed over them to give them the care His chosen ones ought to receive. Perfect health is a requisite, and in the country where fresh air is plentiful, good food abounds and quiet reigns, assuredly the young aspirants are best fitted for the exacting work which education of to-day has become and which on to-morrow will be still more exacting.

The farm selected by the sisters near Springfield was more desirable than the one they eventually had to accept; but as we are only at the beginning of the era of rapid transit, both mundane and aerial, doubtless a day will yet dawn when the sisters will find themselves as close to Louisville as is desirable; that a future generation of Dominican nuns will praise instead of blame those women who made the choice, even though sentiment may have prompted it, for sentiment is often justified by time.

Without delay the sisters started on their work of re-building. The site chosen is a beautiful one, commanding a fine view of the country for miles around. Past the grounds winds the Bardstown and Springfield pike, with Cartwright creek showing its rippling waters toward the northwest. The building fits into the scenery. Except for a certain freshness that proclaims its birth, Saint Catharine might always have stood on Sienna Heights, so truly does it appear a part of the landscape. It is a noble structure, set in the heart of a noble country. It is of its time, as is its mother-state; and behind both lie their splendid

traditions. The youngest nun has only to take a lane leading down a hill to find herself in the spot that saw the birth of her Congregation in America, to kneel at the altar where those first Dominicans worshipped, to stand above the graves where they sleep. That may not mean as much to her as if she were to visit Prouille, but in a time that may come, the spot which Saint Catharine does well to hold and cherish may take a place beside the original home of the Order.

In general outlines the new Saint Catharine resembles the capital E, possessing as it does a long facade with three wings, one on each side and one in the center. The right of the facade and the right wing is devoted to the academic work of the institution, and is well equipped for its purposes. The portion of the front lying to the left of the main center, and the left wing are occupied by the sisters and form the convent portion of the building. In the center of the building is the administrative department, parlors, dining halls, post-office, telephone room, and the center of all religious life, the chapel. The latter is Romanesque in design, and is richly adorned. But the increase in the community and in the student body renders it inadequate, and the beginning of Saint Catharine's second century of existence will see the erection of a new chapel.

The main entrance is imposing and elegant. Upon traversing its wide corridors, floored with polished hardwood, and mounting the broad stairways, we are struck by the spaciousness and elegance of the interior. The sunshine enters un-

restricted through its length and breadth, and there are no dark and gloomy corners. To one standing inside its portals and looking down the gentle slope to the grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes, a charming picture is presented to view.

The sisters saved a few of their art treasures from the fire. In 1918 Mother Francesca employed an Austrian Connoisseur to examine and retouch the oil paintings. He found some rare works of art. Among them is a copy of Sassaferrata's Rosary Picture, made from the original in the Rosary Chapel of the Church of Santa Sabina of the Aventine in Rome. It was painted by Carlo Cripì, a Roman artist, about 1770. This picture now hangs in the cloister hall on the first floor. It was given to the sisters by Rev. R. P. Miles when he returned to Saint Rose as prior on May 1, 1833. The picture was one of a collection brought to Cincinnati by Rev. John T. Hynes, who was ordained at Saint Rose before Bishop Fenwick left for Cincinnati, and was sent by him to Europe to collect for his new diocese. In order to execute a commission of the Master General, Father Hynes, afterwards bishop of Zante, and later administrator apostolic in Demerara, British Guiana, returned by way of South America and gathered up a number of additional art treasures on the way. Among them was this Rosary picture. From the extraordinary size of the canvas, the picture must have been painted as an altar-piece for some church or chapel. The Virgin Mother, seated on a throne, holds the Divine Child on her knee

while she extends the Rosary to Saint Dominic as he kneels at her feet in the deepest reverence. Saint Catharine, on the opposite side, is wrapt in awe and wonder. The shading of the robes of the Blessed Virgin and the Holy Child blend harmoniously into the somber hues of the draperies of Saint Dominic and Saint Catharine. The expression of the faces are very life-like. This picture is of great value. When the first church was built in Springfield, the sisters gave this picture as an altar-piece. After the new church was built, Rev. Father Hennessy kindly returned it to Saint Catharine.

The other paintings given to Saint Catharine at the same time are Rembrandt's beautiful Madonna, and a picture of Saint Catharine of Sienna. The artist of the latter is unknown, but it was painted about the year 1800 on hand-woven canvas. The original is in the Cathedral of Mexico.

Murillo's "Hooded Madonna" was given to the novitiate by the provincial, Father O'Carroll, afterwards made auxiliary bishop of Trinidad. The "Ecce Homo" by Guido Reni was brought to Sister Mary Raymond Bird by a friend who visited Rome.

St. Jerome, as he is being flagellated by an angel for preferring the works of Cicero to the Hebrew writings, is an attractive and beautiful picture. The connoisseur thought this was painted either by Domenichino, or by one of his pupils. This painting was given to Sister Marietta by her uncle.

The portrait of Right Rev. R. P. Miles was painted in Rome and is an excellent work; but the



artist is unknown. The Ascension of Our Lord, a copy of the famous work of Fra Angelico the renowned Dominican artist of the Florentine school, is also in the collection. The artist of the Dominican Monk copying manuscripts is unknown. It is painted on hand-woven canvas and is of the Spanish school of art. It was one of a collection that was sold at auction in Boston and later purchased by the sisters.

Another very valuable painting at Saint Catharine is Perrugino's, "Man Born Blind." The painter was Raphael's teacher, and belonged to the Florentine school of art. This painting is valued at two thousand dollars. This, with the scenes in Sicily, belonged to a collection made by Rev. Thomas Magennis of Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts. A friend of one of the sisters purchased these and presented them to the convent after the death of Father Magennis.

Another treasure is a crucifix, hand-carved in wood which is thought to be about three hundred years old. It originally came from Santa Clara Franciscan Monastery in Santa Fe, and was given to St. Catharine by Rev. J. E. De Vos, Pastor of Saint John Berchman Church, Chicago, Illinois.

The figure of Christ is about four feet in length and perfectly proportioned. Standing out from its plain black wooden cross, the startling life-like tints, the blood-stained beard, the mortal agony, the perfect submission and world-embracing charity depicted upon the countenance, are portrayed with all the appealing force of the inspired artist.



## CHAPTER XVII

### New Missions

At the first election for prioress held in the new Saint Catharine, July 25, 1906, Sister Vincent Ferrer was chosen; but feeling unequal to the responsibility of the office, she declined the honor. Bishop McCloskey presided at the election, and after some deliberation, acceded to her wishes, and appointed Sister Magdalen Norton prioress.

The work confronting Mother Magdalen was stupendous. The incomplete condition of the mother-house and academy, with the debt the building had entailed, in itself seemed an overpowering task; but to this were added the growing needs of the missions, and the necessity of establishing new schools, in compliance with the demands of bishops and priests, and for the continued expansion of the Order.

But with the cross goes the strength to bear it, and Mother Magdalen entered on her duties with characteristic Dominican zeal and trust. One of her first acts was the opening, in September, 1906, of Saint Patrick School, North Platte, Nebraska, of which the Rev. Stephen Carroll was pastor. The first colony was composed of Sister Vincentia Maguire, Sister Teresa Webb, Sister Agnes Shanahan, and Sister Ursula Greenwell. The school grew and flourished, especially the music department, which, in the years that followed, was successively under the

direction of Sister Teresa Webb, Sister Imelda Brady and Sister Louise Robertson. The mission was closed in 1912.

In the same year, Mother Magdalen took over the parochial school of West Lynn, Massachusetts, which had been taught by the Sisters of Notre Dame. The school was in charge of Sister Bridget Connelly, Sister M. Pius Kennedy, Sister De Sales Donovan, Sister Fabian Allen, Sister Gonzales O'Connor, Sister Osanna Quinn and Sister M. Stephen Hartley, who took possession of their new home on December 29. The sisters received a warm welcome from the pastor and from the sisters of the neighboring parishes, especially the Sisters of Saint Joseph and the Sisters of Saint Ann (French); while a gracious act of courtesy was shown them by the departing Sisters of Notre Dame, who left little notes in the registers expressing their wishes for the success of those who were to continue their good work. Under the direction of Sister Ceslaus McIntyre the new eastern mission soon took its place among the leading schools of the city. Sister Margaret Mary Kiley is the present efficient superior.

A third parochial school opened by Mother Magdalen was that of Saint John Berchmans in Chicago, Illinois, in September, 1907. The pastor, Rev. Julius DeVos had been instrumental in causing the sisters to enter the West, by establishing them at Spalding, Nebraska, and he has ever proved a good friend of the community. Sister Raphael Huber is at present superior of the Chicago mission, which was founded

by Sister Antonius Nealy, Sister Fabian Allen, Sister Cecilia Kennedy, Sister Madeline Ferriell and Sister Marcella Donnigan.

In 1907, Saint Stephen School, Exeter, Nebraska, was opened with Sister Bertrand Sheehan, as superior. Rev. Walter McDonald was the pastor. On his death in 1917, he was succeeded by the Rev. E. Boll. With the prospect of a new school building, the future for the Exeter mission is encouraging. Sister Thomasina Gilmartin is the present superior.

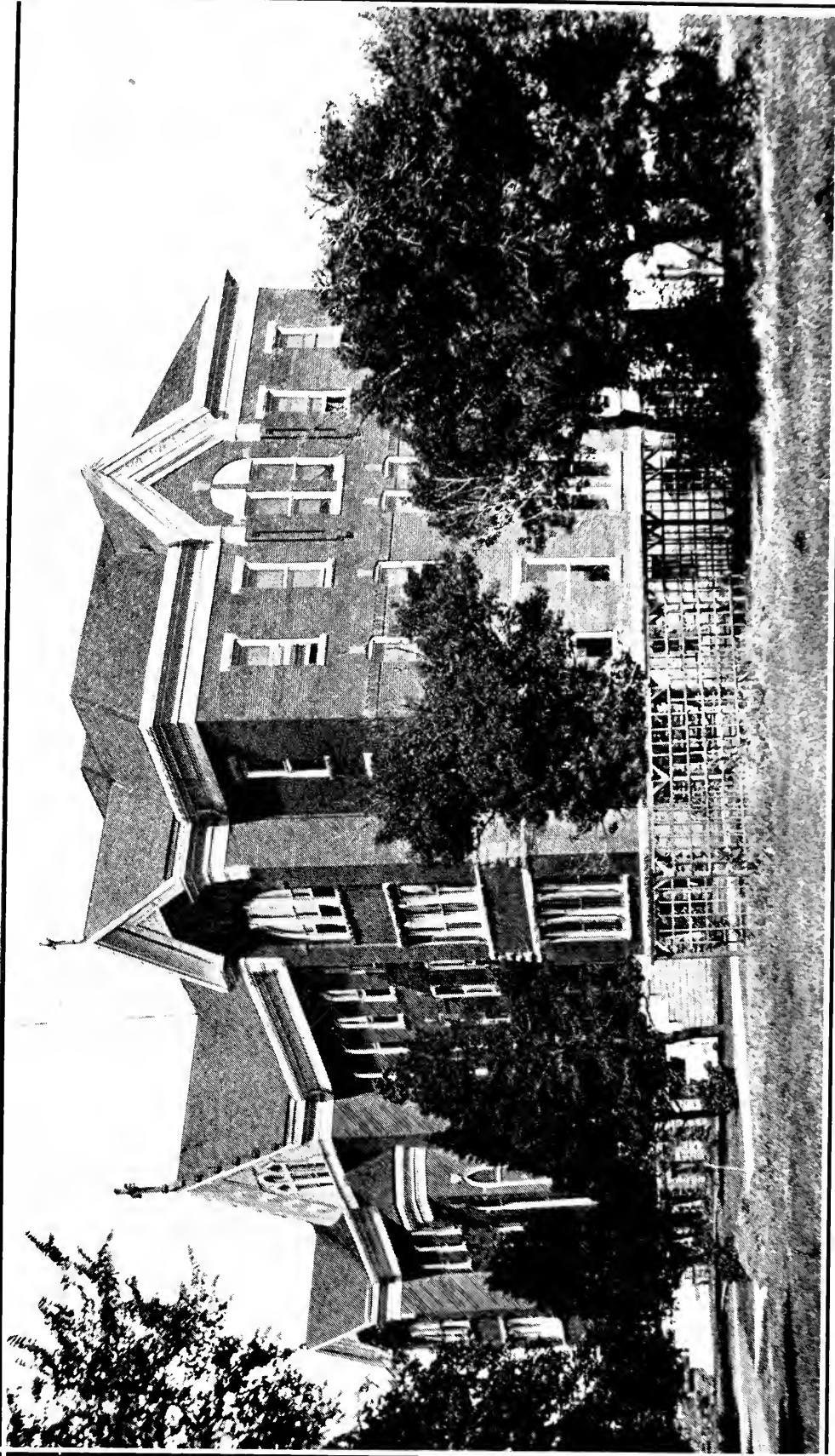
In the year 1908, Misses Frances and Rose Howe, friends of the community, offered to give the sisters their homestead and one hundred and thirty-five acres of land, near Chesterton, Indiana, on the condition they would build a school there. As the donors wished work to begin at once, and the sisters were unable to comply with this condition, the generous gift was declined.

One of Mother Magdalen's last official acts was the acceptance of the Immaculate Conception Academy, at Hastings, Nebraska. The property had originally belonged to the Visitation Nuns, who had erected splendid buildings in 1889. Owing to successive crop failures in that section of the state, which naturally prevented parents from patronizing the school, the sisters found themselves unable to pay their debts, and they were compelled to relinquish their beautiful convent and academy to their creditors and to seek refuge in a more favorable environment. For years the building had been unoccupied,

as the failure of the Visitation Nuns, capable as they were, deterred other communities from accepting the offer of the property.

With the advent of better times, the citizens of Hastings, irrespective of creed, determined to make one more effort to re-open the school. Under the leadership of the Rev. William McDonald, the sum of eight thousand dollars was raised, the Catholics contributing three thousand, and the Commercial Club the remaining five thousand for the purchase of the property. The good work of the Dominicans at Spalding was known to Father McDonald and others in Hastings. It was felt that if a community of Dominican Sisters could be secured for the lately acquired property, the desired object would be attained, and religious education re-begun in the majestic pile which had been the pride of the town, but whose silent corridors and untenanted rooms were now its reproach.

In response to the offer made by Father McDonald and his fellow citizens, Mother Magdalen visited Hastings in the spring of 1909. While well aware that the opening of a school of this character meant a heavy drain on the community, and additional debt, since the building would have to be modernized, still she saw its future possibilities in the substantial and growing locality. To the great joy of the people, she decided to accept the property, and started preparations for the opening of classes in September.



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION ACADEMY, HASTINGS, NEBRASKA





That summer Mother Magdalen laid down the burden of superiorship, and Sister Mary Aquin Holleran was elected prioress. The academy at Hastings made the first demand upon the attention of Mother Aquin. She pushed ahead the work, and on August 9, 1909, sent a carefully selected band of sisters to open the new foundation. It was composed of Sister M. Louis Logsdon, superior, Sister M. Pius Fitzpatrick, Sister Aloysius O'Connor, Sister Teresa Webb, grandniece of Hon. Benjamin F. Webb, celebrated Catholic historian of Kentucky; Sister Margaret Hamilton, Sister Louis Bertrand Lancaster, Sister Rose McCarthy, and Sister Anastasia Gorney. It is doubtful if any foundation of the Order ever received a more sincere and general welcome than that accorded the sisters by the people of Hastings. They were solicitous for the comfort of the nuns and zealous for the success of their undertaking. The bishop of the diocese, the Rt. Rev. Thomas Bonacum, issued for them the following letter of commendation:

Bishop's House, Lincoln, Nebraska.  
May 5, 1909.

To the Public:

I beg to state that I am acquainted with the Dominican Sisters of Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent, Springfield, Kentucky, who are about to open a Day and Boarding School at Hastings, Nebraska, early in September of the present year.

The said Dominican Sisterhood ranks first among the illustrious teaching Orders of the Church in America, and conducts schools with eminent success from Massachusetts to California.

I beg, therefore, to commend the Immaculate Conception Academy of Hastings to the favorable consideration of the Catholic and non-Catholic people of Nebraska and the adjacent States.

Thomas Bonacum, Bishop of Lincoln

Responsive to the generous feelings entertained for them, the sisters set to work with a will. Soon every sign of decay disappeared from the building and grounds. About thirty thousand dollars was spent to complete and equip the academy, which is now surpassed by none in the Middle West. During Sister M. Louis' efficient administration two ten acre city blocks were purchased. The patronage of the Immaculate Conception Academy was assured from the first, opening as it did with forty boarders and one hundred day pupils. Each succeeding year has found this patronage increasing, for non-Catholics as well as Catholics appreciate the education and moral training their children receive from the sisters. In 1911, the academy was placed on the list of accredited schools of the University of Nebraska. In the year 1912, the state superintendent, Mr. J. E. Delzell, officially approved the Immaculate Conception Normal School.

Mother Aquin was re-elected prioress in 1912, and her two terms of office saw the Order carried forward in a marked degree. In the East and West, as well as at home, its activities were quickened and its influence extended under her wise administration. Scarcely had she seen the academy at Hastings established, when a similar institution in Massachusetts was begun.

At Watertown, the cradle of Dominicanism in New England, the need of a school for the higher education of girls was apparent, and this need was supplied in 1911, by the opening of Sacred Heart

Academy. The site was purchased at the cost of \$9,000, and classes were started in October of that year. Msgr. Roche, pastor of Saint Patrick Church, officiated at the opening services and gave an encouraging address. From the first the sisters and pupils were fairly comfortable. Kind friends came forward to provide needful things; Msgr. Roche furnishing the parlor, the sisters from Saint Patrick School supplying articles for the dining room and kitchen. Rev. Father Kelliher helped to provide the vestments. Other benefactors of the first year were Rev. T. W. Coughlan, of Mount Auburn, Rev. J. N. Supple of Charlestown, Rev. Father Kelley of North Cambridge, Rev. Father Kelley of Newton, Dr. Kelley of Watertown, Mr. J. W. Quinn of Waltham, Mr. Sarsfield Cunniff, Mr. Dennis Corbett and the relatives of the sisters forming the community. These were Sister Imelda Brady, superior; Sister Hildegarde Hart, Sister Victorine Donovan, Sister Justina Hooper, Sister M. Lawrence Welsh, Sister Magdalen Norton and Sister Amadeus Coleman. Two years later the progress of the school warranted improvements to the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars. A new building was erected in front of the original convent. This addition furnished study hall, classrooms and three music studios on the first floor. On the second are the chapel, sacristy and bedrooms. The third floor is devoted entirely to sleeping apartments. During the following years, the academy has kept pace with educational advancement.

In August, 1917, Sister Victorine Donovan was appointed superior. During her administration more land has been purchased and many improvements have been made in the school and on the grounds. She has also added many features for the betterment of the work of the students.

Besides opening these two academies, Mother Aquin built the new academy at Spalding, Nebraska, purchased the new property at Park and Fourth Avenues, Louisville, for Holy Rosary Academy, and added the new wing to Saint Agnes Academy, Memphis, at a cost of \$50,000.

In the meanwhile calls upon her for parochial schools were incessant. In September, 1912, at the earnest solicitations of the Rev. J. H. O'Neil, a school was opened in East Boston. The first community was composed of Sister De Sales Donovan, Sister M. Thomas O'Leary, Sister M. Bridget Connelly, Sister Sebastian Conley, Sister Lucilla Crofts and Sister Borromeo Brennan. Such has been the growth of this school, that it is now the sixth to the largest in the great archdiocese of Boston. Here also the sisters have endeared themselves to the pastors and people, and happily find their labors fully appreciated. Some idea of the regard in which they are held may be gleaned from the intention expressed by Father O'Neil of giving the main altar of the proposed new chapel of Saint Catharine of Sienna at the mother-house in memory of the sisters who have worked in his parish.

In these later-day records of Saint Catharine's expansion, it would appear that every call made by

Massachusetts was echoed by Nebraska and *vice versa*. The year that saw the school opened in East Boston, witnessed the sisters entering Cedar Rapids, Nebraska, in response to the appeal of the Rev. G. Vermeulen for teachers. The colony sent comprised Sister Raphael Huber, Sister Benedicta Meany, Sister Zachary Shore and Sister Alvarez Herlihy. With Sister Henrietta Osborne, superior, and an increased number of teachers, this school continues to do excellent work.

Dawson, Nebraska, welcomed the white-robed daughters of Saint Dominic, in September, 1913. The pastor of Saint Mary Church, Dawson, the Rev. F. A. O'Brien, had been a pupil of the Dominican Sisters at Watertown, Massachusetts, and his plea for teachers could not be denied. The band consisted of Sister M. Bertrand Sheehan, who had been one of Father O'Brien's teachers; Sister Mildred Conway, Sister Bernice Doucette and Sister Edmund Harrington. They found a comfortable home awaiting them, and in the intervening years the relations in the mission have been happy. At present Sister Clementine Hearn is superior.

In 1913, North Cambridge, Massachusetts, received the sisters, who, on the invitation of the Rev. J. P. F. Kelly, pastor of the well-organized parish of Saint John, opened a school in that place. In the first community were Sister Joanna Rowan, Sister Philomena Tohig, Sister Germaine Donovan and Sister Zita O'Keefe. The school was open to none but children of the first grade. Each year a new

grade was opened until the eight were added, and now twenty sisters are engaged in this attractive mission, which is one of the most successful attached to Saint Catharine. Priest and people take keen interest in its progress, thereby assisting and encouraging the sisters greatly in their work. Sister Barbara O'Neil, formerly mistress of novices at Saint Catharine, is the superior.

The next school was opened in Fremont, Nebraska. In response to the solicitation of the Rt. Rev. Bishop Scannell of Omaha, Mother Aquin sent Sister Mary Dominic Simms, superior; Sister Louis Bertrand Lancaster, Sister Rose Filiatreau and Sister Clarissina McCarthy to Fremont, in August, 1914. They were accompanied by Sister Vincent Ferrer as Visitatrix of the western houses. They were met by the Rev. J. J. Sullivan who conducted them to a large new and modern building. The school continues to do efficient work under the supervision of Sister Rose.

From these pages we have visioned bands of ardent young nuns setting forth, in obedience, to their widely separated posts of duty. We may now pause to consider others setting forth singly in an obedience not of earth. Hearing their last summons, they folded their meek hands, and while the trembling voices of the sisters chanted the *Salve Regina*, the death-song for the Dominican nun, they crossed the mysterious borderland to enter upon their eternal mission.

Not one of those dear departed, but well merits remembrance in these pages which record the story

of her Congregation; for her hands have helped to up-rear it, her life sacrifice and prayers have helped to draw upon it the blessing of God. And the life of the lowliest occupant of that last home of Saint Catharine's daughters would offer material worthy of consideration. They came in the radiant morning of life and laid their sacrifice upon the altar-stone, nor ever knew regret. With a courage that staggers the beholder, they stripped themselves of all to which they were bound by human affection, broke all earthly ties, and surrendered their will entirely to another. Bidden to go afar and dwell among strangers, perhaps in uncongenial environment, they murmured not even in their thoughts; and with equal readiness they departed even for plague-infested places. Whether caring for the material needs of the community or instructing the children in the classroom, their work was performed in the one spirit of abnegation, and they asked for no release, so that death often found them in the midst of their labors. But hidden in life, death still secures for them the desired privacy. The annals of their Congregation give the date of their reception, their profession, their death. That is often all there is of the fact of their existence, until the day of the Great Revealing.

But out of the ranks of the hidden, the needs of the society drew some either to occupy exalted positions, or to engage prominently in the work of the Congregation. The lips of the world were more or less familiar with their names, and

their praise was poured out freely when, in their turn, they joined their other sisters in the silence of the tomb. One of those names cherished by friends of Saint Catharine, was Sister Agnes Hunt, who died December 4, 1908, as a result of the fire which destroyed the mother-house while she was prioress.

Another of those grand women was Sister Mary Benven Rumpf, whose name is likewise entwined with the history of Saint Catharine. One of the early members of the community, she was allotted to pass sixty years in the religious life. At intervals she was connected with the various missions, but the major part of her life was spent at the mother-house. She died March 2, 1915.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### The Congregation Approved by Rome.

While the Congregation had made progress, the sisters were more or less restrained by certain provisions in the Constitution which had been given them in 1895. Bishop McCloskey, after an episcopate of forty-one years, died September 17, 1909, and was succeeded on February 7, 1910, by the Right Rev. Denis O'Donoghue, titular bishop of Pomario and auxiliary of Indianapolis.

Bishop O'Donoghue has ever evinced his high regard for Saint Catharine. When, in 1914, Mother Aquin and her council began negotiations to obtain the papal approbation for the Congregation, the new ordinary not only warmly approved the project, but also gave it every assistance. His Eminence, Cardinal O'Connell and other bishops in whose dioceses the sisters were engaged, also sent letters commending the life and labors of the Dominicans of Saint Catharine.

The cause thus strengthened, Mother Aquin confided the important matter to the Very Rev. Thomas Esser, O. P., Secretary of the Index, at Rome, who immediately took it under consideration. The inauguration of this notable movement marked the close of the highly meritorious official life of Mother Aquin. In the summer of 1915, at the expiration of

her second term of office, she resigned the reins of government into the hands of the newly elected, and, as it was destined to be, the last prioress of Saint Catharine of Sienna who was to govern the whole Congregation, Mother Francesca Kearney. The Rt. Rev. Bishop O'Donoghue presided at the election, assisted by his secretary, the Rev. Father Monaghan.

The family name of Mother Francesca is one intimately and splendidly associated with Dominicanism in the United States. Her brother, the Very Rev. L. F. Kearney, O. P., S. T. M. served as provincial of the Saint Joseph Province for a number of years, and under his administration it made notable advance; while his fame as a pulpit-orator is widely established, reflecting credit on his Order and his native state, Kentucky, both celebrated for the eloquence of their sons.

Mother Francesca was born near Lexington, Kentucky, on November 4, 1868, and was educated at Saint Catharine Academy, Lexington, and at Saint Catharine of Sienna Academy, Springfield. She made her religious profession on March 7, 1889, and taught with much success in Saint Francis de Sales School, Charlestown, Massachusetts, and Saint Agnes Academy, Memphis, Tennessee. In the summer of 1909, she was made superior of Holy Rosary Academy, Louisville, from which office she was called to assume the general superiorship of the Congregation. Mother Francesca seemed to be providentially fitted to grapple with the difficulties that at times beset even the best organized communities. She is quick

to see the opportunities of the moment and as quick to act, being gifted with indomitable courage and resolution. She is one of those rare souls who unite in their natures the highest intuitions of the spiritual order with a genius for the practical. Her manner and words bear witness to that serenity of soul whose source of strength lies beyond all earthly inquietudes and uncertainties.

The Laudatory Decree for the Congregation was received from Rome, on August 5, 1915, through Bishop Esser, O. P. This decree was the first step in the approval of the Constitution which had been submitted to the Sacred Congregation some months before. Owing to the terrible conflict then raging in Europe, little progress was made for almost a year. Then, through the efforts of the Very Rev. F. G. Horn, O. P., Collegio Angelico, Rome, the work was resumed and a revision of the Constitution, made by Bishop Esser, was again presented to the Sacred Congregation in the fall of 1916. Delays at Rome again retarded the work and when the time came for the Constitution to be given consideration, a second revision was ordered to make it conform with the new Code of Canon Law about to be issued. The revision was undertaken by Bishop Esser, in January, 1918.

In the meantime, Father Horn had left Rome as companion to the Master General, but he had given the work into the capable hands of the Rev. J. T. McNicholas, O. P., the present bishop of Duluth, Minnesota, who at once interested himself in the

cause and rendered invaluable assistance. Much work was before the Sacred Congregation, but at the insistence of Bishop Esser and Cardinal Frühwirth, O. P., now Cardinal Protector of Saint Catharine, the Constitution was taken under consideration. After ordering some changes and corrections, the cardinals submitted the Constitution to His Holiness Pope Benedict XV, who approved it for seven years, on April 28, 1918. The happy tidings were received at Saint Catharine by cable from Father McNicholas, on May 1, 1918, and received confirmation a month later by letters from Bishop Esser and Father McNicholas.

When the newly consecrated Bishop McNicholas came to take possession of his see of Duluth, he brought with him the official copy of the Constitution. In compliance with the suggestion of Bishop McNicholas, extra copies of the Constitution were printed for the accommodation of other Dominican sisterhoods, since even those with approved Constitutions would have to be guided by that of Saint Catharine until their own could be revised in conformity with the new Canon Law. Copies of the Constitution have been sent to Ireland, England, Germany and even to South Africa, besides the many copies distributed to applicants throughout the United States.

The text of the Decree of Approbation is as follows:

In an audience granted on April 18th to the secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, having weighed the matter carefully and considered the fruitful labors of the insti-

tute known as the Sisters of the Third Order of Saint Dominic, called after Saint Catharine of Sienna, located at Springfield (Saint Catharine), in the State of Kentucky, North America; and having read the commendatory letters of the Bishops of the places where the Sisters are located, and especially having heard the favorable decision of the Cardinals placed over the Sacred Congregation, who assembled in council on April 26, 1918, and weighed this matter carefully, Our Holy Father Benedict XV deigned to approve and confirm the aforesaid institute as a religious Congregation of the simple vows under the rule of a Mother General; moreover, he approved and confirmed as an experiment for seven years, the Constitution of this Institute as contained in this book, a copy of which is preserved in the archives of the Sacred Congregation, as by the tenor of the present decree he approves and confirms the Institute and its Constitution as above, without violation of the jurisdiction of the Ordinaries, as according to the rule of Canon Law.

Given at Rome from the office of the Secretary of the Congregation of Religious, on the Fifteenth day of August, 1918.

F. Card. Cassetta,  
Adolphus, Archb'p Aquillan., Secretary.\*

In the meantime Mother Aquin, who had inaugurated the obtaining of this blessing for the Congregation, did not live to see it an accomplished fact. While superior of Holy Rosary Academy, Louisville, she was stricken August, 1917, with her last illness and died the following October 17, at the mother-house. Mother Aquin was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Holleran, of Louisville, Kentucky, where she was born, December 5, 1858. Her early life was passed in loving and devoted service to her pious parents. She entered the Dominican novitiate at Saint Catharine about the year 1882 and was admitted to profession, September 1, 1885. In the thirty-three years of her life in religion, she labored

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\*Archives of Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent.

zealously for God's glory, for the salvation of souls and the well being of her society. The law of kindness was her guiding principle, and to it she added an abiding spirit of prayer. The world knew little of her, for under the garb of humility her deeds of virtue were carefully hidden. The love, respect and confidence of her sisters she early won, and she served them in many capacities, ever displaying energy, tact and skill. For several years she held the important post of novice-mistress, and to the souls that she nurtured and trained in virtue and self-abnegation, she was a model of firmness and patience, a devoted mother and a guardian of prayer. In the various offices of superiorship, she was the edification of her sisters, and in the administration of business affairs she exercised far-sighted judgment and constructive energy. For six years she held the office of prioress of Saint Catharine of Sienna Community, and admirably she filled the office and discharged its exacting duties. Numerous missions were accepted and various charges assumed during her term of office, for her policy was to strengthen and to develop the influence of the community. To the task she applied herself with utter self-forgetfulness. Mother in name, by right of title, she was most of all, mother in deed.

Early the following year, Saint Catharine was called upon to give up another of her valiant daughters, and also a former prioress, in Mother Vincent Ferrer Thompson, whose death occurred January 19, 1918. Sister Vincent was born in Washington

County, Kentucky, in 1838, and sixty-four of her eighty years of life she gave to the service of God as a Dominican nun. Her name has frequently been found on these pages as superior, for her administrative talent was acknowledged by all. She governed the missions at Mattoon and Effingham, Illinois, and Waverly and Charlestown, Massachusetts. Elected prioress of Saint Catharine in 1891 and again in 1894, she was faithful in the discharge of her duties, and the Congregation experienced many beneficial effects from her administration. In 1906 her community again called upon her to govern it, but pleading her advancing years, she was released. She continued to remain at the mother-house, however, helping and directing all those who appealed to her for guidance.

Thus of the seventeen prioresses who governed the Congregation from its foundation until 1915, which saw the election of a mother general, in Rev. Mother Francesca, still happily ruling, but one, Sister Magdalen Norton, is still living. Like her predecessors and successors in the office, she did not spare herself in the performance of its duties.

The honor that accompanies exalted office lacks for the true religious the glamour it wears for the worldling. The responsibilities it carries, the intercourse with the outside world it demands, are repugnant to those who seek after the interior life; and of all her sacrifices, the supremest is, when bowing to the expressed will of her community, a religious assumes the office of superior. Yet how well,

when called from their cloistral silence to dwell in the white light that beats upon all high offices, these prioresses of Saint Catharine have performed their work, their history here recorded, tells. The one-room log house by the waters of Cartwright Creek has developed into a magnificent mother-house, and the one humble little school has multiplied into six flourishing academies and twenty-five parochial schools scattered over the East, West, North and South. The farm that scarcely supported the founders has been added to until the valuation of its improvements runs into the hundreds of thousands of dollars; and the little community of that day now numbers about four hundred members. Vain, however, would this enumeration of the advancements of the Congregation be, if no more could be said. But back of all, transfusing all, is the spiritual life, so carefully cherished, so wonderfully increased since it fell as a seed from the hand of God on the hearts of Angela Sansbury and her companions. Down the vista of the century we behold it, a glowing radiance in the lives of those who have continued the work begun that seventh day of April, 1822, and see a reflection of it in the lives of the thousands of men and women trained by them in their schools. This, not her material success, is what makes Saint Catharine of Kentucky truly great and wealthy and it is a further tribute to the wisdom and piety of her superiors. The superior is as a light set on the high place, and as her flame of the spirit burns, so will that of her community. Therefore do the superiors of Saint Catha-



THE FIRST COUNCIL.





rine merit our praise and rightfully wear the crown of love and gratitude freely given them by their sisters.

Mother Francesca's first term of office witnessed the opening of several missions. The first of these was that of Saint Mary, South Omaha, Nebraska. As early as 1904, the pastor, Rev. C. Mugan, asked for sisters for his school, but the request could not be granted. His renewed appeal was heard, and on August 12, 1915, a band consisting of Sister Lucy Spalding, Sister Mary Oscamp, Sister Inviolata Christian, Sister Bernice Doucette and Sister Corona Hougnon was appointed to the work. They were warmly welcomed by Father Mugan and his people. Such has been the growth of the school, that the sisters were obliged to turn away pupils at the opening of classes in September, 1920, owing to lack of accommodations. Plans are being made for additional classrooms and an increase in the faculty. It now has Sister Catharine Toomey for superior.

When the diocese of Kearney, Nebraska, was formed in 1912, and the newly consecrated bishop, Right Rev. J. A. Duffy, D. D., took possession, he found about sixty families in the parish of Kearney. He realized the need of a parochial school where religious education would be fostered, and determined that this should receive immediate attention. Aided by the zealous Father Meustermann, the money was collected and in the spring of 1915 ground was broken and the foundation of the new school of Saint James was laid. Work was pushed forward and the

school was opened in September, 1915. Sister Agatha Brown, Sister Catharine de Ricci Miller, Sister Aquinas Mullany and Sister Pelagia Brannigan formed the first faculty. At the present time Sister Rosine Price has charge of this excellent mission.

In September, 1916, the Rev. B. O'Connor of Havelock, Nebraska, appealed to Mother Francesca for sisters for his new school, and in compliance with his request, Sister Agnes Shanahan, Sister Thecla Rafferty, Sister Sadoc Wimsatt, and Sister Adelaide Jamrog were missioned to Havelock. The school had just been built and everything was in readiness for the reception of the sisters. Their quarters are commodious and comfortable at the present time. Sister Callista is superior. A beautiful new convent giving the sisters every comfort and convenience has just been completed there. The same summer of 1916 a school was opened at Missouri Valley, Iowa, of which the Rev. M. P. Nolan is pastor. Sister M. Agnes Kelley, Sister Cecelia Kennedy, Sister Angela Cullinane, Sister Amelia Gould and Sister Catharine Toomey formed the first colony. Sister Winifred Schwanner is at present the superior of this progressive school.

On January 1, 1917, ground was broken for the new wing of the Holy Rosary Academy, Louisville, and an addition was begun to Sacred Heart Academy, Watertown, Massachusetts. At the mother-house, improvements were also made. Among these were the erection of a new house for the men employed on the place, the laying out of the front lawn and placing

on the grounds of the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes. The statues for the grotto were donated by Mrs. J. R. Barber, Mrs. Robert Clements and Mrs. Nellie Wathen Medley. Sister Veronica Livers had charge of the work of beautifying the grounds and the results commend her good taste. Early in the same year, 1917, work was commenced on the chaplain's house and it was ready for occupancy in September. Rev. Angelus Wildenburg, O. P., was the first chaplain to occupy it, receiving his appointment March 16, 1917. But his occupancy of the comfortable home was of brief duration. While going on a visit to Saint Rose, June 13, 1918, his automobile veered as it approached the bridge over Cartwright Creek, and plunging down the embankment carried the venerable priest to his death.

Nebraska again called upon Saint Catharine for aid through the Rev. A. H. Kunz, O. M. I., of McCook. Receiving the assurance from Mother Francesca that she would send him teachers, he began the erection of a school and convent, but owing to the scarcity of labor, the building was not ready for occupancy when the sisters arrived in September, 1918. Father Kunz, through the kind consideration of the Board of Education, engaged two rooms in the annex of the east ward school, and here on September 19, were opened the first four grades of Saint Patrick School, and a few days later a third room was secured for the sixth and seventh grades. The first community consisted of Sister Fabian Allen, Sister Agnes Shannahan, Sister Adelaide Jamrog, Sis-

ter Alvarez Herlihy and Sister Aquina Hines. This is one of Saint Catharine's most flourishing missions. In September, 1920, twenty of its girl pupils entered the sisters' academy at Hastings, while it has already sent four capable aspirants to the novitiate.

A new field was opened in 1918, when answering the appeal of the pastor, Rev. John Dally, Mother Francesca sent a community of her sisters to Elkins, West Virginia. Elkins is a country town, with a small number of Catholics in the midst of a non-Catholic population. The parochial school had been taught by a lay teacher, but realizing the greater good religious can accomplish, Father Daly laid his petition before Mother Francesca. Sister Sabina Filiatreau, Sister Benedicta Meany, Sister M. Agnes Kelley and Sister Rita Coleman formed the first colony and already their work is bearing fruit. A year later two additional teachers were sent to this mission. Rev. Father Daly of Elkins, West Virginia, gave one thousand dollars toward the erection of the new chapel in appreciation of the work of the Sisters of Saint Dominic. The year following, 1919, a mission was opened at Red Oak, Iowa, by Sister Innocentia Farrell, Sister Rose McCarthy, Sister M. Anthony Griffin and Sister Ann Marie Doyle.

On August 15, 1921, at the earnest and repeated solicitations of Rev. A. H. Kunz, O. M. I., pastor of Saint Patrick Church, McCook, Nebraska, Saint Catharine of Sienna Community entered a new field of labor in taking over the General Hospital of that



CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC, MEMPHIS, TENN





city. Ten acres of land were donated and a drive was immediately inaugurated to collect funds for a new hospital. This new undertaking is under the patronage of Saint Catharine of Sienna and Sister M. Pius Kennedy is in charge of this institution. Rev. A. A. Unger, O. M. I., is the chaplain.

Early in the spring of 1921 Rev. Charles Fischer, pastor of Sacred Heart Church, South Bend, Indiana, invited the Sisters of Saint Dominic to take charge of the parochial school of his parish. Mother General and Sister M. Louis Logsdon went to South Bend and were favorably impressed with conditions and felt that much good could be done for souls in this mission. School was opened on September 6, 1921, with most of the children of the parish of school age. The colony consisted of Sisters Clara Simms, M. Dominic Simms, Rose McCarthy, Agnes Shannahan, and M. Aquin Richards.

On the same date, September 6, 1921, a new school was opened in Saint Bartholomew's parish, northwestern Chicago, Illinois. It is a new fireproof building with every modern improvement. Rev. Father O'Shea is the able and zealous pastor. Sisters M. Sienna Byrne, Clementine Hearn, John Dominic Ferguson, and Angelita Hewitt formed the first corps of teachers. The large attendance on the opening day made it necessary to ask for an additional teacher. Sister Bernarda Goff was sent to assist in this mission.

Saint Agnes Academy at Memphis partook of the general progress of the Congregation. In 1918,

Mother Francesca purchased the property adjoining the academy, known as the Porter home, for forty thousand dollars. It was the intention to open a school for small boys, but the idea was abandoned following the objection of the Right Rev. Bishop Byrne on the ground that it would be injurious to the parochial schools of the city. The bishop wanted the community to use it as a home for working girls. As this would entail a heavy expense, it was decided to convert it into a conservatory of music and art, in connection with Saint Agnes Academy. It was opened in September, 1918, and has been conducted with signal success. Sister Teresa Webb is superintendent of the musical department. This addition to the already spacious and beautiful grounds of Saint Agnes Academy makes it one of the most valuable pieces of property in the city.

Next to that of the mother-house, the history of Saint Agnes Academy claims the interest, and redounds to the glory of the Congregation. The story of the heroism of its sisters during war and plague, crowns not only the Dominican nuns with honor, but, exemplifying what sacrifice their vocation implies, all religious orders as well.

“Nor shall their glory be forgot  
While Fame her record keeps.”

The death of its founders occurred as follows: Sister Ann Simpson, July 13, 1883, Saint Agnes Academy, Memphis; Sister Vincentia Fitzpatrick, August 11, 1893, Saint Cecilia Academy, Nashville, Tennessee; Sister Emily Thorpe, January 13, 1888,

Saint Catharine, Kentucky; Sister Magdalen Clarke, November 30, 1893, Saint Cecilia Academy, Nashville, Tennessee; Sister Magdalen McCormack, August 8, 1851, Saint Agnes Academy, Memphis.



## CHAPTER XIX

### Sisters Again Become Nurses

With the approbation of Rome and the enforcement of the new Constitution, the Congregation naturally experienced an invigoration, whose effects were felt throughout its various departments. This approval of our Holy Mother Church stirred every sister's heart with zeal, awakened every mind to its importance, and added the freedom needed for the management of its extended activities, thus enabling the Congregation to meet more effectively the changing conditions of the times. The novitiate drew an increased number of aspirants to the higher life and more demands were made upon the mother-house for teachers for the schools.

In accordance with the rulings of the new Constitution, the Congregation was now to be governed by a mother general, assisted by four mothers of council, these to be elected for a term of six years, by delegates from the various houses of the Congregation. The first election under the new Constitution was held July 25, 1918, with the following results: Mother Francesca Kearney, Mother General; Sister M. Leo Quirk, First Counsellor and Vicaress General; Sister Margaret Hamilton, Second Counsellor; Sister M. Louis Logsdon, Third Counsellor; Sister Alexia O'Sullivan, Fourth Counsellor and

Secretary General; Sister Baptista Riley, Bursar General.

We now come to a page of Saint Catharine's history, which again reflects the heroic spirit of her daughters. Again were they called upon to quit the safety of their convent, to abandon their professional duties, and to face grim death in the horrible form of pestilence. Throughout the world war, Saint Catharine, at home and in her various missions, had splendidly responded to every call of humanity, and, of patriotism. Her contributions to the Red Cross were generous, while sisters and pupils gave all their leisure to the work of their respective units. The feeble hands of the aged nuns plied the knitting needles, saying prayers all the while for their country and its gallant defenders. By the busy teacher in the schoolroom a similar piece of work lay, and every interval free from her duties, found it in her hands. During that period, the convents of our land were veritable knitting and bandage factories, and this part of their contribution alone, was an important one.

In the East, the sisters also rendered assistance to the Knights of Columbus by providing articles for the altars. At Camp Devens, when the poverty of the altar was made known to the sisters they secured the necessary articles. Every Saturday two of the sisters went to the camp and prepared the altar for the Sunday services. This work was continued during the war. They furnished the altar in each of the three K. of C. buildings with what was required for

the divine service. At Hastings, Nebraska, the sisters made a bolt of gauze into bandages each week during the war.

About the time the military masters of Germany were beginning to realize the failure of their dream of world supremacy, and were preparing to retreat before the invincible forces of democracy, a deadly and subtle disease entered our homes and camps, and spreading rapidly through the land, numbered its victims by the thousands.

At Camp Zachary Taylor, near Louisville, Kentucky, some eighty thousand soldiers, the flower of American manhood, were in training. The first case of the Spanish Influenza, as the plague was called, developed at the camp, September 26, 1918, and spread like wild fire. Stalwart and hardy men, as well as the less robust, went down before it. Soon the base hospital was filled to overflowing and emergency hospitals were opened. Sadness and gloom enveloped the once flourishing camp. Hundreds were dying daily and the people of the state stood aghast at a destruction more appalling than that caused by the enemy's guns. Distracted officers, striving to cope with the situation, fell by the side of their men. Doctors and nurses were rushed from various points, but they were soon overwhelmed by the increase of the disease, and knew they need expect no recruits, since not a hamlet or lone farmhouse but had its victims, who also were calling for medical aid.

Not soon shall it be forgotten, how the Knights of Columbus with other organizations, tried to stem

that awful tide of death at Camp Zachary Taylor, nor how the people of Louisville and Jefferson County, unmindful of self, aided them. For of all who must meet death by that merciless black plague, most sympathetically did the public heart beat for those soldier boys, whom the hand of the Nation, in her hour of need, had gathered from stately mansion and humble home, from populous city and lonely countryside, and was there training to carry forward the success of their brothers at the front. Scarcely now would that be their destiny, and on the eve of peace, to watch them mowed down by an invisible foe, bowed the soul with keener anguish than even that felt for those who had yielded up their lives on the blood-soaked plains of France.

Then into this place of horrors, into this vast house of pain, came, one memorable day, a new band of women to minister to those tortured bodies, soothe the last anguish of these departing souls. Three days after the plague had invaded the camp, the Rev. Regis Barrett, O. S. B., United States army chaplain, arrived at the hospital area. Alone, he labored without a moment's rest or sleep, among the dying men, from the day of his arrival, September 29, to October 2, when other priests came. Father Barrett saw the need for more nurses, and knowing the impossibility of obtaining them, he secured permission to appeal to the sisterhoods of the state. The response was as he had expected. Dominicans, Loretines, Sisters of Nazareth, Franciscans, Sisters of Mercy, Ursulines—they left their work in hospital or



schoolroom, and making an offering of their lives to God and their country, they presented themselves before the government authorities at the camp. The Dominican Sisters were from Holy Rosary Academy, Louisville, and among them were, Sister Dolores Spalding, Sister Boniface Higdon, Sister Theophane Rittmeyer, Sister Marie Leonard, Sister Laurentia Filiatreau, Sister Anthony Griffin, Sister Laetitia Keene, Sister Lucille McCabe, and Sister Alberta Johnson.

The officers' quarters had been generously offered for the sisters' sleeping apartments. Every effort was made to secure the comfort of the religious. A large room was converted into a temporary chapel. Their mess hall was located nearby. Ambulances were ready to carry them to the more distant barracks. Everyone seemed anxious to render the sisters some service. The supervisor of the Red Cross nurses met the sisters on their arrival, gave them brief and hurried instructions and assigned them to their respective wards.

The following account was written by one of the Dominican Sisters, and it tells the story of the love and devotion of that brave band of nuns:

Alone, I approached my barrack. Though only seven o'clock in the evening, it was already quite dark. A tall black guard with his gun thrown over his shoulder paced slowly to and fro on the front grounds. I entered the building, and observed through a side door, a large mess hall with its long rows of bare wooden tables and plank benches. Just beyond this was the kitchen. I walked down the hall my heart making quick thumps against my side, and my mind rapidly reviewing the nurse's instructions. Soon I stood before another open door. What a sad spectacle

met my gaze! There in an immense room, were rows and rows of khaki-covered beds, occupied by moaning and tossing patients; many of them vomiting and calling for water.

The ward-master approached and said: "Sister, I am glad you have come to help us. The orderlies will assist you in every way they can." He handed me a record of the critical patients, and showed me the medicine case. Then I started on my rounds to do what I could for my hundred patients.

In a short time, the night doctor came in, examined the serious cases, prescribed medicines, and left. How the minutes did fly as I hurried from bed to bed with cold water, cough medicine, ice-bags, etc. Here was one vomiting, there was one with a violent hemorrhage, another with a throbbing headache. I tried my best to comfort and help them, and each and everyone was as mild and docile as a child. It was most pleasing to see the trust and confidence they placed in "nurse." Even the roughest and hardest faces softened into childlike simplicity and eagerness as the nurse approached.

Morning finally dawned, and a sergeant came and told me I was to go to breakfast. Throwing on my cloak, I started toward the headquarters building to meet the other night sisters. As I walked along I realized that I was indeed very tired and sleepy, but my heart was happy and beat with joyous thanks for the opportunity of offering my poor work to God and my country in this pressing cause. The sisters met at headquarters and were taken in a large ambulance to the mess hall for breakfast. On the way we exchanged experiences—some sad and doleful, others extremely ludicrous.

After breakfast I went to bed smiling over the novelty of sleeping all day. In the evening, I was awakened by one of the sisters. I looked about in a lost and puzzled way for a moment, then got up thinking all the while of the dreadful "flu," and the poor sick-soldiers to whom I must return in a short time. I was dressed in a few minutes and going out, met the other nurses hurrying about. How we laughed as we caught ourselves exchanging "good morning" while the sun on the western horizon was casting its good-night rays upon the earth! One sister went so far as to say her morning office before realizing the time of day.

When I returned to my ward I found the patients in about the same condition as I had left them in the morning. A few had been removed to the base hospital, but their beds had been al-

most immediately occupied by new patients. Late that same evening another patient entered. As I was attending him, I knew by the way he addressed me that he was a Catholic. Finally, he said to me: "Sister, I wonder if you could buy me a rosary. I lost mine while moving my bunk last week and haven't had a chance to get another one yet. I told him he might have mine and though it was one I had treasured since my novitiate days I gladly gave it, thankful to know that this poor sick soldier thought of our Blessed Mother and had devotion to her rosary.

One night, an orderly came running up to me saying: "Come quick, nurse, there's a man dying in here; he has the death rattle in his throat." I hurried in and found Sister M. with him. He was half propped up and gasping for breath. One of the orderlies explained that he had just taken a drink and it choked him. Soon he began to breathe more easily, but his hollow cheeks and death-like color showed plainly that the poor fellow had not long to live. I then thought of his soul and remembered from his brief, showing his number, name, home address, religion, rank in the army, etc., that he was a Presbyterian. "But it will do no harm to speak of God," I thought, so I asked him if he wished to see a chaplain, to which he consented. "A Catholic chaplain will be this way soon—perhaps you would like to see him?" He answered that he would not object. In a few minutes, Father Murray was standing by his bed-side. After a short conversation, Father called me and said he was going to baptize the man. Joyfully, I hurried to get the water and performed the happy duty of sponsor for this dying soldier of Christ. Father remained with him some time praying and speaking words of consolation. After he left, sister and I returned to him. A heavenly peace shone from his countenance. In a few minutes the doctor came in, examined his lungs, found that pneumonia had developed and ordered him to the base hospital. As he was being carried out on the stretcher, he said good-bye, asked for prayers and was soon being jostled down the road to the base hospital, some twenty minutes' distance. In two days, I inquired for him. The answer came, "Mr.———died the morning after he came to the hospital." I turned away. How wonderful are Thy ways, O God! This soul with the chastening waters of salvation yet glistening on his brow, had been gathered up in Thy loving arms for eternity.

Never did the poor boys seem sicker than this night. Such coughing and moaning, vomiting, hemorrhages, and calling for this, that and the other, went on all night. Everyone sad-

dened my heart in his pleading appeal for the relief I only longed to give.

The patients were called by their bed numbers. "No. 72 is very ill," said little Sister Mary Jean, the Loretto nun, who contracted the "flu" and died. "I do wish I could do something for him. The poor boys, my heart aches for them."

"Yes," I replied, "He is very sick, I have just given him his medicine and bathed his head. The doctor looked at him a short while ago, but made no remark about his condition. Let us go over to him again."

His nose had been bleeding, and though it was packed with cotton, it continued to bleed in a steady stream. His body was almost constantly shocked by violent coughing and vomiting. I asked him if he would take another tablet, but he said in a broken, gasping voice, "It is no use, I can't keep any medicine down." I tried to comfort him, asked him if he was praying to God and begging for strength to be patient and resigned. He said, "I had not thought of that." I then asked him to repeat some ejaculations, "My Jesus mercy! Help me to be patient. Make me better." He did so, and promised to say them often. His brief showed that he was a Lutheran. I asked him if he would like to see a chaplain. "Why yes," he replied. "Our Catholic chaplain will gladly come, if you wish to see him," I said, in a speculative and hopeful way. "All right, I'll see him," adding with difficulty, "I go with a Catholic girl. She is a school teacher in F.——Wisconsin." Coughing prevented his saying more. "Yes," I said. "She is praying for you and how glad she will be to know that you have seen a priest. Would you like me to write to her?" "Yes, I would," he gasped.

Soon Father McDermott arrived. They began their interview. I hurried away and busied myself with other patients. In a short time Father called me and said, "Sister, I'm going to baptize this man." Again I stood sponsor to another Christian soul. Father then gave him Holy Communion, enrolled him in the brown scapular and anointed him. It was a touching and beautiful scene. How sweetly and simply the man, in a strained whisper repeated after Father, "My Jesus mercy, I am sorry for my sins. I will never sin again."

One evening Father Barrett stopped to inquire about the patients. I informed him that there were several Catholic boys who wished to see him. So he started out on his visitation. Finally, I led him to No. 43, a blue-eyed, red-haired, ruddy-complexioned man, who, I made sure was an Irish Catholic. Father



SCENES IN LOURDES PARK



spoke to him, but soon returned saying: "That man is not a Catholic. At least, he says he isn't. What religion is marked on his brief?" We looked it up and much to my amusement and chagrin, we found that he was a **mason**.

Three weeks rolled by, the mason received his discharge. He was very happy to depart and said that he felt no sorrow in leaving that "flu" bed. Two weeks more passed. One day Father Barrett was passing through the base hospital and he noticed his sandy-colored mason. He had contracted the fatal spinal meningitis. Father stopped, and spoke to him. During the conversation the man expressed his admiration for the work the sisters had done. Father asked him if he had ever known any of his brother masons to risk their lives as those sisters had done. He replied, "No never. Those nuns must have a religion that is sincere and true." He then began twirling his masonic ring. Finally, he jerked it off and hurled it out the door. "Father," he continued in a determined voice, "I want to belong to their religion." What providence and mercy! Soon the fortunate man was baptized and anointed, and in a few hours he joined his fellow converts in the blissful realms of peace.

After five weeks, the dreadful enemy slackened its infuriated attacks; the disease was abating. The majority of the soldiers were discharged and extra nurses were no longer needed. Consequently the sisters were dismissed and returned to their respective homes, happy to be back again in the quiet of their convent.

Six of the Sisters of Saint Dominic contracted the disease while in camp; two of them were dangerously ill for several days, but all finally recovered. On November 5, the sisters were dismissed and left the camp, not without hearing words of gratitude and thanks from the lips of officers and men.

While the people of the lowlands of Kentucky were still fighting the foe at the camp, from the mountain fastnesses of the state came poignant cries of distress. In the mining camps, where thousands of foreigners were located, the plague was raging,

while in the towns and outlying districts its victims were dying by the score. Whole families were stricken and there was none to minister to them.

Again Father Barrett, U. S. A., commanded by the government, made an appeal to the sisterhoods of the state, and again not vainly. The Dominicans, Loretines, and Sisters of Divine Providence responded, and they were assisted by the Sisters of Charity and Sisters of Mercy of Cincinnati. On October 28, Sister Vallina Young, Sister Vincentia Maguire, Sister Louis Bertrand Lancaster, Sister Laetitia Keene and Sister Baptista Riley of Saint Catharine, left Louisville for the Big Sandy and Elkhorn Camps. Sister Vallina and Sister Laetitia took up their labors at Van Lear; Sister Baptista and companion at Auxier, and Sister Louis Bertrand and Sister Vincentia at Wayland and Wheelright. Shortly after their arrival, one of the sisters wrote:

Our days are very busy. We spend our time going from house to house taking the place of doctor, nurse and housekeeper. There is a small hospital at Wheelright where we stay, when not at work in the camps. A man was brought to the hospital with pneumonia. He lingered between life and death for forty-eight hours, but is now recovering. A woman came in, too, but she lived only a few hours. I sent her to Heaven by baptizing her just a few minutes before she died. The officials are most kind and appreciative and do all in their power to assist us. One of the greatest difficulties is the distance which must be covered each day in order to visit the victims. Every day we walk miles. Then not having the consolations of religion is indeed a sacrifice.

An extract from a later letter reads:

In one house every member of the family was down with influenza. The baby had died of spinal meningitis before we



arrived. We prepared the body for burial, placed it in the casket, and spent the remainder of our time cleaning the house and securing nourishing food for the mother and the two boys. The neighbors helped us to make sheets, pillow cases and other articles that were needed.

This family was well on its way to recovery before the sisters left them.

The experiences of the sisters in the different districts were equally trying, but everywhere they were greeted with kindness, appreciation and gratitude. None of them contracted the influenza, fortunately, and as the situation improved sufficiently to warrant the departure of the nurses, Mother Francesca recalled her sisters on November 12. Before the sisters left the mining camps, the priests and officials of that section went in person to thank them for the services they had rendered.

During their stay they had been visited by Miss Maguire and Miss Caden of the Lexington Red Cross Chapter, who went to the mines to investigate conditions there relative to the influenza situation. After their return to Lexington, Miss Maguire wrote to Mother Francesca:

The noble, self-sacrificing work of the sisters has been greatly appreciated and spoken of in the highest terms. May I add our humble thanks, and assure you that it was a genuine pleasure to be associated even in a small way with the glorious manifestation of charity they displayed.

The press reports of the situation and of the relief work accomplished by the Catholic sisterhoods numbered, among many comments, a lengthy appreciation issued by the Ashland, Kentucky, Division

of the United States Fuel Administration. The following is a brief extract from their tribute:

The sisters came into the eastern coal fields at a time when the conditions resulting from the epidemic, were at their worst, and when the efforts to secure doctors and nurses were seemingly fruitless. At that critical hour, with coal production in the district reduced to a minimum because of the spread of the disease among the miners, a little band of nurses from Catholic institutions, promptly came to expose themselves to the virulence of the disease, at the call of suffering humanity. Long and faithfully the sisters worked, putting their lives in jeopardy daily, going from house to house, nursing the sick, irrespective of creed or nationality, alleviating conditions, aiding the neglected, doing work of the most humble character, going to bedsides where many others had refused to venture, and giving their service without compensation, other than the consciousness of duty well performed.

In the two concluding phrases of that tribute for this special work done by them, is summed the story of Saint Catharine's daughters, from the day of their foundation, a century ago. They gave themselves to humanity, whether in preparing the rising generation to attain greater heights, or, when occasion demanded, in facing the perils of the battlefield or of plague-infested places claiming as their only reward the consciousness of duty well performed. No greater immolation can be made to the world than this perfect offering of life, as these Dominicans, with countless others have made. Their earthly happiness, their talents, their life—all they have, they have given for the benefit of others. Truly are they the highest benefactors of mankind!

This service during the influenza epidemic was rendered, not only by the sisters in Kentucky, but the

sisters on the missions also gave assistance to the afflicted. Their school at Missouri Valley, Iowa, was converted into a hospital, and the teachers became nurses for the victims of the plague. In the East, at the request of His Eminence, Cardinal O'Connell, the sisters assisted in caring for the sufferers in their own homes, especially for the poor and neglected. The closing of the schools gave them ample opportunity to carry on their ministry of kindness, and they were the means of bringing back many to the practice of their religious duties. Without thought of self, they faced the grim disease, and pitted their strength and skill against its terrible power, often winning in the long conflict. Of all Saint Catharine's sisters who nursed the victims of the influenza, in the camps or in the homes, none lost her life, and only a few contracted the disease. Was not this a reward from heaven for their sacrifice?



## CHAPTER XX

### Chaplains and Friends Among the Clergy

During the century of its existence, Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent has been blessed with many distinguished and loyal friends. The first and foremost was our saintly and learned founder, Rev. Samuel Thomas Wilson, O. P. While he and Bishop Fenwick labored and planned for the development and extension of our holy Mother Church, the spread of the influence of the Order of Saint Dominic, and the instruction and administration of the sacraments to the members of their flock, they did not forget the little ones whom it is ever the chief care of the Church to protect. Even before Rev. E. D. Fenwick came to this country, he began arrangements for a community of Sisters of Saint Dominic in the United States, but on account of the unsettled conditions of this country, the establishment was deferred until April 7, 1822. Yet, during all this time he and Father Wilson gave themselves to their work without stinting, without saving, yes, without measure; they gave labor, time, talent, and their kindest, gentlest thoughts and they never wearied of giving. Rev. S. T. Wilson, O. P., has the first claim to our gratitude, as the greatest of our benefactors. His parents were good Catholics and belonged to the merchant

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This Chapter was prepared for this volume by a Sister of Saint Dominic.—Author.

class in England. He was sent in the year 1770, when only a mere boy of nine years, to the college of the English Dominicans in Bornheim, Belgium. Seven years later, October 7, 1777, he received the habit of Saint Dominic along with John Fenwick, the uncle of Rev. E. D. Fenwick, and entered the novitiate of the fathers then attached to the college of Bornheim. In religion he added the name of Thomas to that which he had received in baptism. From the beginning, he won the esteem of his teachers and brethren by his deeply religious character, love of study and extraordinary talent. Because of the edict of the Emperor Joseph II, of Austria, he could not be admitted to his religious profession until he had attained his twenty-fifth year, although his novitiate was completed in October, 1778. Thus Brother Thomas did not take his vows until December 8, 1785. The same month he was made sub-deacon. The following year he was raised to the deaconship, and on June 10, 1786, the eve of Trinity Sunday, he was ordained a priest of God by the Right Rev. Ferdinand M. Lobkowitz, bishop of Ghent.

As a young priest, perhaps even before ordination, Father Wilson had Edward Fenwick for a student. A strong bond of friendship soon developed between master and pupil that was never broken. It was at this time that the English friar, through his manly qualities, good judgment and exemplary religious life, exercised a strong formative influence on the mind and character of the young American student and religious. There can be but little doubt

that Father Fenwick consulted his friend and confidant concerning his purpose of entering the Order of Saint Dominic; that he confided to him his desire of one day establishing it in the land of his birth, and that the two men often discussed the ways and means for best insuring the success of such a laudable enterprise.

When, therefore, as has been seen, the American Dominican felt that the time had arrived for him to set about his long contemplated project of establishing the Order in the United States, his first step was to obtain the authorization of his superior at Rome. The next was to enlist the services of Father Wilson. With him he felt that this great undertaking would surely succeed. Without him all was problematical, if not doomed to failure.

In the meantime, Father Wilson had taught both in the college and in the novitiate at Bornheim, gaining renown as a scholar, philosopher and theologian. At the time of the French invasion, in 1794, he fled to England with his community. In 1795, he returned to Belgium in the capacity of vicar provincial, commissioned to recover, if possible, the property which had belonged to the province and which had been confiscated by the revolutionists. By tactful prudence he managed to get a partial compensation for the property, so that when the trouble had subsided, Father Wilson re-opened the college and was appointed its president in addition to filling the office of vicar provincial. Previous to this time, he had obtained successively the Dominican degree of Lector and Bachelor of Sacred Theology. In 1802, he

was accorded that of Master, but this degree did not reach him until after he had come to America.

It was with the approval of the Master General of the Order that Father Wilson left Belgium in the summer of 1805 to join Father Fenwick who had preceded him to the United States the year previous. He arrived in Maryland early in September and, after a short respite, he journeyed on to Kentucky, where it had been decided that the little band of Dominicans under Father Fenwick should establish the Order of Saint Dominic. Father Wilson reached his destination near the close of the year 1805 and at once began his zealous labors which were to continue for nearly twenty years, and which were to bear rich fruit and to crown his name with glory that will last as long as the Church of Kentucky. He and his brethren were the first Catholic educators west of the Alleghany Mountains whose work bore permanent results. Every inch a gentleman and a true priest of God, an exemplary religious, endowed with an abundance of common sense, ever kindly of manner, courteous, approachable, and admitted to be the most learned man in the West, people came from far and near to consult him on almost every topic. Thus apart from his ministerial and educational labors, this great friar wielded an influence for good among all classes. Bishop Flaget, as has been stated, considered the erudite friar as the shining light of his diocese.

On June 19, 1821, Pope Pius VII, created the diocese of Cincinnati and appointed Rev. E. D. Fen-



wick, O. P., the first bishop. Right Rev. B. J. Flaget had recommended his appointment. He had felt for some time the need of another bishop in the West. He could think of no one so admirably fitted for the work as his friend and co-worker who had so often come to his relief in carrying spiritual help to the good people of his diocese. Bishop Fenwick was consecrated in Saint Rose Church on January 13, 1822. This was the second consecration that had taken place in the West. Saint Rose Church was much too small to afford even standing room for the crowd that had flocked thither with the hope of witnessing the ceremony. The choir was under the direction of Rev. R. P. Miles, O. P., who was one of the most accomplished musicians of his time. Bishop Fenwick left Saint Rose almost immediately after his consecration but before doing so, he, Father Wilson, Father Miles and Father J. A. Hill had discussed and planned the foundation of the first Sisters of Saint Dominic in the United States. The story of their work and its results has been recorded in preceding pages.

Rev. R. P. Miles was born in Prince George County, Maryland, May 17, 1791. His father, Nicholas Miles, emigrated with his family to Kentucky when the boy was only five years of age. In 1807, he was sent to Saint Thomas Aquinas College, Washington County, Kentucky. The following year, he received the habit of Saint Dominic and, notwithstanding his youth, persevered in the state to which he felt that God had called him. After years of discipline and

study, he was ordained a priest in September, 1816, and entered on a long career of missionary labor in Ohio and Kentucky, being one of the most zealous priests in establishing Catholicity in those states. He, with Rev. J. A. Hill, was active in assisting Rev. S. T. Wilson in the first foundation of the Sisters of Saint Dominic. All the memories and traditions of Bishop Miles, testify to the dignity and zeal with which he labored for the spread of holy Mother Church. He was consecrated bishop of Nashville, Tennessee, on September 8, 1838, by Bishop Rosati of Saint Louis,\* and proceeded alone to his see where there was not then a priest and only two very poor churches. Considering the condition of Catholicity in the state of Tennessee where the faithful were few, poor and scattered, and often separated from each other by mountain ranges, the work accomplished by Bishop Miles in organizing and building up the diocese was certainly remarkable. He arranged for the establishment of the Sisters of Saint Dominic at Nashville, but did not live to see the foundation. After reciting his office on February 17, 1860, seated before the fire, Bishop Miles found himself unable to rise. He was conveyed to his bed and medical aid was summoned. His case was at once pronounced fatal and, after receiving the last sacraments from the hands of Bishop Whelan, he calmly expired on February 21, 1860.

Right Rev. James Whelan, O. P., the second bishop of Nashville, was ever a kind and devoted

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\*The Hierarchy of the Catholic Church in United States—Shea.  
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friend to the sisters. We find in the early records that he officiated a number of times at the reception and profession of the sisters at Saint Catharine of Sienna. His missionary labors in Kentucky, Tennessee and Ohio were similar to those of the other pioneer Dominicans. He knew what it was to take long journeys over rough roads in order to celebrate Mass, to administer the sacraments or to give instruction. He was made coadjutor to Bishop Miles on May 8, 1859. The declining health of Bishop Miles compelled him at once to assume all the active duties of the episcopate, and on the death of Bishop Miles the following year, he became the bishop of Nashville.

Another devoted friend of the sisters was Rev. Joseph T. Jarboe, O. P. He was born in Washington County, Kentucky, on June 29, 1806, the same year that saw the establishment of the Order of Saint Dominic in the United States. His holy life of toil and sacrifice is intimately interwoven with the history of the Order of which he was an illustrious exponent. On June 13, 1830, he was ordained by Bishop Fenwick, at Saint Rose. His health was so poor at this time that he had to be supported to the altar that he might receive the sacrament of Holy Orders, yet he outlived the Dominicans of his time by many years, being left alone in the midst of other generations of white-robed friars. In 1833, Rev. Father Jarboe, with several sisters and two lay brothers, was sent to take charge of the town of

Springfield, during the cholera epidemic. So great was the terror of the people that all who could, fled from the town, leaving the sick and dying uncared for. Father Jarboe and his assistants were obliged to act the part of spiritual consoler, nurse, physician and undertaker. The records says that eighty persons succumbed to the disease and were buried in less than fifteen days. Those who survived the scourge were so filled with gratitude that Catholic and non-Catholic alike united in purchasing land for a church and school. This land remained the property of the sisters until after the present Catholic church was built. During the Civil War, Father Jarboe became chaplain of a Tennessee regiment under General Clebourne. After the battle of Shiloh, he was arrested as a spy, his zeal in caring for the wounded and dying having carried him across the Union lines. He was being taken out to be shot, when the party was met by General Phil Sheridan, who recognized Father Jarboe for whom he had served Mass in Somerset, Ohio. He immediately ordered his release, and, it is said that the language used was more vigorous than polished. In Father Jarboe's old age, he traveled back to Saint Catharine to see his friends and relatives before he embarked on his long journey.

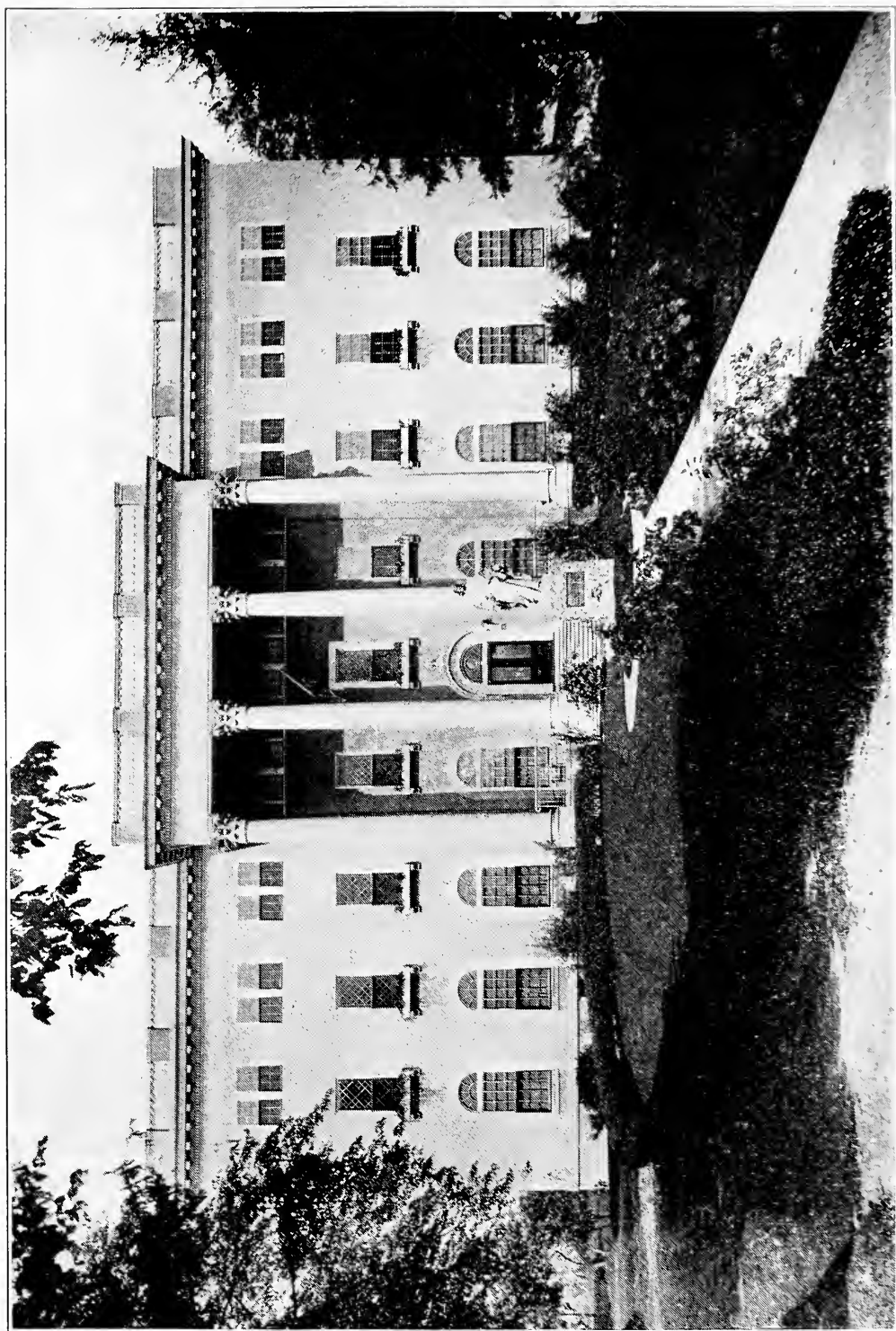
In the records of reception to the habit and profession of the sisters in the early days, we find the names of Rev. Fathers Thomas Polin, S. H. Montgomery, C. D. Bowling, N. D. Young and a host of other holy and saintly priests and missionaries who gave to the state the influence of their individual

piety and learning. They combined fervent zeal for religion with earnestness in the spread of the Gospel truths, not only among the faithful lay people, but also extended their counsel and advice to the heroic little band of Sisters of Saint Dominic who were struggling with poverty and difficulties. Here and there we find reference to their instructions to the sisters, exhorting them to courage in the service of the Master, and reminding them that she who strives earnestly to make herself more knowing, more loving, more helpful, becomes conscious of ever-increasing inner strength and joy.

Rev. Joseph Sadoc Alemany, O. P., later the first bishop of Monterey, and the first archbishop of San Francisco, was chaplain of Saint Catharine in the year 1848. He was deeply interested in the development of the sisterhoods in this country, as he realized that he who would develop in the young a sense of religion and duty, of honor and freedom, must himself be alive with these elemental powers. In 1850, Father Alemany went to Rome to attend a general chapter of the Order, and while there was appointed bishop of Monterey, California. He was consecrated by Cardinal Franzoni in the Church of San Carlo, June 13, 1850. He induced Rev. F. S. Vilarrasa, O. P., to accompany him in order to found a convent of the Order in his diocese. Mother Mary Goemare and several novices from a French convent in Paris also made this journey to aid in instructing the little ones, and thus build up the Church in California. As soon as the Right Rev. J. S. Alemany, O. P., returned

to this country, he at once set to work in the stretch of land assigned him for a diocese. A new population of American people had by this time immigrated to California, including many Catholics, so that Bishop Alemany had to provide priests for Spanish, English and Indian tongues. The year before his consecration, a little wooden chapel had been reared as the first Catholic Church in San Francisco. Bishop Alemany had few priests, few churches, and no institutions for charity or education. Only a man endowed with courage, zeal and determination such as his could have borne up under the strain and hardships of those pioneer days.

Prominent among the friends and counsellors of the latter half of the nineteenth century appear the names of Rev. Fathers M. A. O'Brien, J. A. Kelley, S. A. Clarkson, H. F. Lilly, D. O'Carroll, C. L. Egan, D. J. Meagher, J. C. O'Mahoney, J. L. O'Neil, C. H. McKenna, L. F. Kearney, and J. F. Colbert. Rev. M. A. O'Brien entered the Order as a lay brother, but was afterwards placed in the ranks of the clerics and eventually became the provincial of his province. No priest was more favorably known through all the middle West during the five and thirty years of his missionary life than was Father O'Brien. He was a great comfort and help to the sisters in their struggles and trials in the early days of Holy Rosary and Saint Louis Bertrand parochial school. Father O'Brien died on January 15, 1871, as he had lived, actually giving a mission. He was a firm believer in the words of the famous Lacordaire, "Let us become



SACRED HEART ACADEMY, WATERTOWN, MASS.





strong, for the great evil of our day is weakness." So great was the veneration in which he was held by the people of Saint Rose parish, that when his body was brought by train to Lebanon, some eleven miles distant from Saint Rose, the people went in great numbers to Lebanon to escort his remains to its burial place.

Rev. J. A. Kelley, O. P., was a devoted friend of the sisters throughout his long and active life. He was especially connected with the sisters in Memphis during the war and the yellow fever epidemics.

After the resignation of Bishop Whelan of Nashville, in 1864, Father Kelley became administrator of the diocese. It was during the yellow fever epidemic that he distinguished himself. Even though advanced in years, this heroic and self-sacrificing priest might be seen going from one afflicted home to another, ministering to the sick and to the dying and assisting in burying the dead. Rev. C. H. McKenna, O. P. speaks of this time: "All the Dominican Fathers who were in Memphis had died of the yellow fever, except the aged hero, Father Kelley. Being left alone, he wired the provincial for another priest who, in turn, wired to Saint Louis Bertrand Convent asking that I send a priest to Memphis immediately. Whom should I send? It was certain death in a week or ten days to whoever would go. I read the provincial's telegram to the fathers and then went to the chapel to pray. Soon the youngest priest in the community, Rev. Joseph Scannell came and

asked to go." Heroically he consecrated to God and to the welfare of humanity his time and energy, thus relieving Father Kelley of some of the anguish, but his assistance was of short duration as he contracted the fever after a few days of service and succumbed, a martyr to his love of God, and pity for the afflicted.

Rev. C. L. Egan, O. P., was through many years a devoted friend of the sisters. Father Egan was a courageous and holy priest and did much for Catholicity in Saint Rose parish. The present Saint Rose convent was built by him. Father Egan served as a chaplain in the civil war. I quote from *Memoirs of Chaplain Life* by Rev. W. C. Corby, C. S. C.

On the 29th of November, 1863, says Rev. Constantine L. Egan, O. P., Chaplain of the Ninth Massachusetts Volunteers, we advanced to Mile Run, and formed a line of battle, bivouacking for the night. The enemy was posted on the east ridge about one mile from the stream called Mile Run on a ridge nearly a hundred feet above the surface of the stream. Their works could be easily seen by us, posted on the west ridge of the stream. They were strongly fortified, their works bristling with abatis, infantry parapets and epaulements for batteries. About three o'clock in the afternoon of November 30, 1863, the order was given to charge the opposing line. Seeing the danger of death before us, I asked the Colonel to form his regiment in a solid square so that I could address the men. He did so. I then spoke to them of their danger, and entreated them to prepare for it by going on their knees and making a sincere act of contrition for their sins, with the intention of going to confession if their lives were spared.

As all the regiment fell on their knees, other Catholic soldiers broke from their ranks and joined us, so that in less than two minutes I had the largest congregation I ever witnessed before or even since. Having pronounced the words of general absolution to be given in such emergencies and dangers, I spoke a few words of encouragement to the soldiers and they then arose from their knees, grasping their muskets with a firm clinch, and went back to their respective commands, awaiting the hour of the assault.

Rev. H. F. Lilly was a close friend of the sisters during his long and active life. Father Lilly strove to realize in himself the ideal of the Friar Preacher; that his brethren so frequently chose him to rule over them is sufficient evidence that he succeeded. He is remembered not only as a capable executive, but also as a man of culture and of wide learning, an eager student, an earnest priest and a superior devoted to the observances of the conventual life.

A name held in great reverence and veneration is that of Rev. C. H. McKenna, O. P., the apostle of the Holy Name and one of America's greatest missionaries. The illustrious Dominican was born on May 8, 1835, at Fallalea, County Derry, Ireland. At the age of sixteen, he came to this country and joined his mother and brothers in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where they had made their home. After many disappointments and overcoming great obstacles, Charles McKenna had the happiness of receiving the habit of the Order on April 20, 1862. In October, 1867, the ardent desire of his life was realized when he was ordained a priest of God. Shortly after this, he was made master of novices. Father McKenna brought to this office all the qualifications needed—chief among these was his love for those who had dedicated themselves to God in holy religion, especially the white-robed children of his own Order. His wide reading, with his own strict discipline, made him a competent guide for the novices in their struggle toward perfection. Father McKenna resigned the post of novice master in order to take up the work of

the missionary and thus began that wonderful career which through his apostolic zeal, holiness of life and eloquence of speech, reaped for the Church in America a harvest whose richness and abundance is known only to God. It was through the efforts of Fathers McKenna, O'Neil and O'Mahoney that the sisters opened the first house of the Order in the archdiocese of Boston. The last years of his life were consecrated to the propagation of the Holy Name Society and the Confraternity of the Rosary. On the morning of Ash Wednesday, February 21, 1917, he passed to his eternal reward.

Of all the learned and loyal friends of Saint Catharine, none is more endeared to the community than Rev. L. F. Kearney, O. P., S. T. M. In the historic town of Lexington, Kentucky, the Rev. L. F. Kearney was born on January 3, 1861. When but sixteen years of age he entered the novitiate at Saint Rose, about sixty-five miles from his birthplace. On the feast of the Assumption, 1878, he made his profession and a year later was sent to Saint Joseph Somerset, Ohio, to begin his course of philosophy and theology. Here his extraordinary talent attracted the attention of the Most Rev. Joseph M. Larroca, then master general of the Order, who was making a visitation of the province at that time. It was upon the advice of the master general that Brother Francis was sent to the Dominican College at Louvain, Belgium. After passing two very successful years under Fathers Albert Lepidi and Dummermuth, both distinguished doctors, Father Kearney

was ordained a priest on September 9, 1883. On his return to America, he was appointed master of novices at Saint Rose, and chaplain of Saint Catharine of Sienna. Here for five years he guided and directed by word and example those generous souls who gathered beneath Saint Catharine's hallowed roof to consecrate themselves to God in the holy way of Christian perfection. The Chapter of 1897, elected Father Kearney provincial of Saint Joseph Province. He proved himself so worthy and competent that he was twice re-elected and held the responsible position for twelve consecutive years. Probably his most abiding and greatest work as provincial was the erection of the Dominican House of Studies at Washington, D. C. Father Kearney also enjoys a national reputation as a missionary and lecturer but in the midst of his successful career, he has ever retained and manifested his old-time friendship for Saint Catharine.

Another kind and generous friend of the Congregation who proved himself such, in days of trial, is Rev. J. F. Colbert, O. P., of New Haven, Connecticut.

Cordial interest has always been manifested toward Saint Catharine Community by the Right Rev. Bishops of Louisville. The friendship of a number of clergymen of the diocese has been a comfort and an encouragement to the sisters. On the whole the friendliest relations exist among the clergy and the religious communities of this diocese. A devoted spirit of Christian charity and harmony is main-

tained among the sisters of Kentucky. Nazareth and Loretto are names especially dear to every sister of Saint Catharine of Sienna Community. To these revered and loyal friends, must be added the names of the Cardinal, the archbishops and bishops in whose diocese the sisters labor for the salvation of souls and the spread of Christian truth. Also to the reverend pastors and their assistants who have so ably assisted band after band of sisters in instructing and guiding the children in those principles of faith and morality on which the future of civilization and humanity are largely dependent.

A word of love and reverence must be said for our devoted friends and benefactors, Rev. Robert P. Stack of Watertown, Massachusetts, and Rev. James N. Supple of Charlestown, Massachusetts. During the seven years that Father Stack lived after the Sisters of Saint Dominic went to Watertown, he never tired doing for them. The one work nearest to his heart was the welfare of Saint Patrick school. Whatever he could do for the Sisters of Saint Dominic was a labor of love. His devoted friend and co-worker, Rev. Thomas Magennis of Jamaica Plain said of him, "Father Stack had a mind of wonderful elasticity and capacity. Never was he happier than when trying to make others so. Good deeds and kind words formed a part of his life work. His hand never tired of bestowing alms, nor his voice never weakened in giving encouragement to the distressed. Many of his good deeds were known to you, his parishioners; the very tone of his voice seemed to

give expression to the feelings of his heart. After doing a good turn, joy seemed to take possession of his soul, that amply repaid him for what he had done." Father Stack was loved by all who came within the sphere of his influence.

Another devoted friend of the sisters for nearly thirty years was Rev. J. N. Supple, or "Father James" as he was affectionately called. Saint Francis de Sales school was the crowning work of his life and he was devoted to his children and to their instruction. He was untiring in promoting this work as he knew he was forming characters, training hearts and guiding souls who were to spread the love and knowledge of Christ in thousands of homes. How well he succeeded many members of our community can testify. The name of Father James is held in loving memory by the sisters, and the Church of Christ is honored in having been served by so devoted a priest.

During and after the terrible fire that destroyed the entire group of buildings at Saint Catharine on the night of January 3, 1904, Rev. R. F. Larpenteur, then prior of Saint Rose, was untiring in his efforts to provide for the sufferers, when he found it would be impossible to save any part of the buildings. The same may be said of Fathers, J. S. Caton, J. P. Roach, J. C. O'Mahoney, J. R. Kennedy, M. P. O'Sullivan, J. H. Leonard, and a number of brothers. All are held in grateful memory for their coolness, quickness and tireless energy in so heroically battling with the fire, and for the care and hospitality extended to the sis-

ters and students until provision could be made for them.

Deep and grateful thanks are due Right Rev. Bishops Esser, O. P., and McNicholas, O. P., and also Father Horn, O. P., for their generous assistance in securing the papal approbation for our community. This confirmation brought with it a sense of security and a greater stimulus to zeal and devotion. While retaining its traditions and customs of piety and self-sacrifice, the community has passed into the ranks of approved Congregations. Another friend of the Sisters of Saint Dominic in Rome is our Cardinal Protector, His Eminence, Andrew Cardinal Frühwirth, O. P. Cardinal Frühwirth is an Austrian by birth. He made his early theological studies at Saint Maximin in Provence. The Friars Preachers of Vienna recognized the ability of their brother, and elected him their prior. This, we believe, is the first preferment shown His Eminence. He later served as provincial of Austria and Master General of the Order. The influence of this worthy son of Saint Dominic was not confined within the pale of convent walls. The Austrian-Hungarian Government recognized in him a diplomat and an executive, and honored him by a membership on the State Council of ecclesiastical affairs. As a mark of the esteem in which this humble Dominican is held at the Austrian court, the Prince Regent, in 1913, decorated him with the Grand Cross of the Order of the Crown. Rome appreciated the sterling worth of Father Frühwirth and on October 31, 1907, the learned priest was made



titular archbishop of Heraclia and sent as papal nuncio to the court of Bavaria by Pope Pius. Pope Benedict XV elevated him to a membership in the Sacred College of Cardinals on December 6, 1915.

Rev. Angelus Wildenburg, O. P., of Saint Rose Province, Belgium, who was on a visit to his distinguished brother, Father John Dominic Wildenburg, when war was declared with Germany, and was obliged to remain in this country, served as chaplain at Saint Catharine of Sienna until his death on June 13, 1918. He was especially devoted to the services and practices of the Order.

Rev. J. A. Dempsey, O. P., S. T. L. succeeded Rev. A. Wildenburg as chaplain. Father Dempsey is a native of Zanesville, Ohio, and was ordained on June 20, 1912. Since his ordination he has spent almost his entire time as novice master and teacher in the houses of study. His kindly and sympathetic nature made him admirably suited to the position. As chaplain at Saint Catharine, he was prompt and efficient and gave freely of his time and energy to the temporal and spiritual welfare of the community. He is skillful in imparting knowledge and gave the faculty of Saint Catharine valuable assistance in their work. Father Dempsey was elected prior of Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent, New York City, and left for his new field of labor on September 15, 1920, carrying with him the prayers and good wishes of his little "parish" in Kentucky. The present able and efficient chaplain is Rev. W. A. Marchant, O. P., one of the professors at the Saint Rose novitiate

where young aspirants for the priesthood and for the Dominican Order are trained.

The kindest and most helpful relations exist between the two religious bodies of Saint Rose and Saint Catharine. The present faculty consists of Very Rev. J. S. Wilburn, Rev. J. H. Foster, Rev. W. A. Marchant, Rev. Father Tracy and Father Leo Hughes. They have ever bestowed upon Saint Catharine their friendship and encouragement.

## CHAPTER XXI

### Educational Ideals

The ideals of Saint Dominic have lived in the Order during the seven hundred years of its existence, and its spirit is just as ardent in the twentieth century as it was in the days of its youth. It is characteristic of the Dominican ideal that those who have most perfectly realized it in their lives belonged to no particular class of laborers. They have ever represented every phase of life and effort: saintly apologists, missionaries and reformers of society, fearless in their burning zeal for the faith and in their love for souls; holy mystics and ascetics prostrate at the font of Divine Wisdom and rejoicing to suffer for the sins of men; saintly scientists, philosophers, theologians and teachers, tireless in their quest of truth and in their noble efforts to make it known; holy servants of the humble and weak, offering up their lives for the assistance and instruction of others; wise counsellors, devoted to the cause of God and of His people; musicians, sculptors and painters, contrasting by means of their art the ugliness and penalty of vice with the beauty and reward of virtue. All these worthy members of the Order have converged into a mighty stream of effort with the single purpose of teaching the truth for the salvation of souls.

The history of the development of the Order in the United States has been fruitful and inspiring.

This is especially true of the Dominican communities of women, whose foundation was laid by Mother Angela Sansbury and companions, on the banks of Cartwright Creek, in Kentucky, one hundred years ago. Scarcely can we grasp the magnitude of the work of those pioneers in the vast wilderness of America of 1822. Besides the outdoor labor there was the struggle to adapt the interior life of the Congregation to the conditions of time and place. In both they succeeded admirably, with little notice, encouragement or approbation from the world. To-day, contemplating the result of their work, in the expansion of the Congregation, the number of its schools, the excellence of its educational training, the holiness of its members, we realize how truly was that little band of women the instrument of God for the spread of knowledge and the sanctification of souls.

In the early days of the republic, the state took little interest in education; that was left to parents, consequently Church and private schools flourished. The Catholic schools were located for the most part in the basements of the churches, since the parish could not afford more than one large building. The salary for teachers was necessarily small; so the sisters became the mainstay of the parochial schools, as well as of the academies, and boarding schools. The parochial schools taught the common branches, which fitted the children of the poor for their simple and laborious lives. The curriculum consisted of reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, with some grammar, geography, elocution and singing. The children were

prepared for the sacraments by diligent training in Christian Doctrine, in the knowledge of the saints, in the practice of various devotions. While the schools were rude in their appointments, the sisters threw the charm of religious teaching around the bare rooms, by telling stories and holy legends which count for so much in a child's life. Then there were the processions to and from church, the May devotions in the classroom and the decoration of school altars and shrines. The academy curriculum included English composition, literature, mathematics, music, drawing, plain sewing and needlework, besides the common branches. The boarding school elaborated these studies, adding painting, vocal music, deportment and manners.

From the beginning, as we have seen, the Dominican Sisters of Saint Catharine Congregation, set and maintained a high standard for their schools. The motto of the Order, "*Laudare, Benedicere et Praedicare*," to praise, to bless and to teach, to seek and to spread the truth, expresses the aim of their schools. Education is worth just the difference it makes in the activities of the individual who has been educated; hence, the value of knowledge acquired at school is determined by the effect on the pupil's will. If this is aroused and urged onward to what is true and good, the teacher's chief work is accomplished. To form character is the end of all education. Character rests on morality, and if it is to have life and growth, it must be invigorated by religion. The teacher of religion has a cause to serve;

the helping of her pupils to attain the end for which they were created. For this, she must bring zeal into her work—she must throw her whole soul into it. A zealous teacher can not be other than an inspiring teacher.

On the fitting of the teachers for their exacting and important mission, Saint Catharine concentrates her best efforts. This commences in the novitiate, where the groundwork of the religious life is laid. There the stripping of self begins; there, the needful lesson of obedience is learned. There, in the silence and the shadow of the Cross, the true meaning of life is obtained; and, consecrated to follow the ideal, which is Christ, the ardent young soul enters the ranks of Saint Dominic's daughters.

Following their profession, the sisters attend the training school at Saint Catharine. This school was re-organized in 1918 and was re-incorporated under the laws of the State of Kentucky in 1920, whereby it was empowered to confer collegiate degrees. For the benefit of sisters in different sections of the country, an affiliated course has been established at the Sacred Heart Academy, Watertown, Massachusetts, and at the Immaculate Conception Normal school, Hastings, Nebraska. Sister Cecelia Hill is the supervisor of Saint Catharine schools in Massachusetts, and Sister Virginia Ford, the sister of Doctor Ford of Harvard College, is in charge of the schools in the West. In addition to this intensive training in her own schools, Saint Catharine provides university courses for a steadily increasing number of the sisters.

The wisdom of Saint Catharine in early securing these advantages for her teachers has been proved on several occasions, and nowhere more strikingly than during the late educational conflict in Nebraska. As will be remembered, the Dominican Sisters entered that state in 1901, when the school at Spalding was opened. The sisters with great foresight, introduced, in 1906, vacation schools, under state supervision. Instructors and lecturers were secured from the University of Nebraska, and other state institutions, and the sisters, as well as secular teachers who attended, received credit on county certificates. The result of the first summer course was most gratifying and received enthusiastic approval from the state Department of Education. The sessions were held again in 1907 and 1908. Though the courses were discontinued the following year owing to considerable change in the teaching force of Spalding Academy, the privilege of holding the examinations given by the state, remained. This encouraged the younger sisters going to Nebraska to earn first grade county certificates, if they did not already hold them, and to study for the professional examinations which lead to a life certificate.

In 1909, the Immaculate Conception Academy was opened at Hastings, Nebraska, and the first summer session was held in 1911. Here, as in Spalding, the energy and perseverance of the sisters gave a new opportunity for improvement. The normal and high school inspectors recommended that the state approve the Immaculate Conception Normal with all

the privileges of the State Normal. Hundreds of teachers have secured certification from this school. The sisters also conduct summer sessions to enable the teachers to renew their certificates or to work for a life certificate. During these summer sessions advanced courses are given to those who wish to work for a degree. A number of sisters have already secured their degrees.

The Dominican Sisters, therefore, were not alarmed, because prepared, when in January, 1919, Roll 64 was introduced into the Legislature of Nebraska. This Bill reads:

#### SCHOOLS—REGULATION

SECTION 2. Qualifications for Teachers in Private Schools:—No person shall after September 1, 1919, be employed to teach in any private, denominational or parochial school who has not obtained corresponding courses or classes in public schools where the children attending would attend in the absence of such private, denominational or parochial school.

SECTION 3. Religious Instruction Excepted:—Nothing in this act contained shall be construed as to interfere with religious instruction in any private, denominational or parochial school.

SECTION 4. Powers of Owner or Governing Board of Private Schools:—For the purpose of this act the owner or governing board of any private school, or denominational or parochial school shall have authority to select and purchase text books, equipment and supplies, to employ teachers and to have and exercise the general management of the school, subject to the provisions of this act.

SECTION 5. Patriotic Studies and Exercises in Schools:—All public, private, denominational or parochial schools shall give in the proper grades such courses in American History and in Civil Government, both State and National, as will give the pupils therein a thorough knowledge of the history of our country and its institutions and of our form of government and shall conduct such patriotic exercise as may be prescribed from time to time by the State Superintendent.





DOMINICANS UNDER THE MANTLE OF OUR BLESSED MOTHER



SECTION 6. Inspection of Private Schools by County Superintendent:—The County Superintendent of the County, or the City Superintendent of the City, where any private, denominational or parochial schools are located, shall inspect such schools and report to the proper officers any evidence of the use of any text books or of any activities, instruction or propaganda therein subversive of American institutions and republican form of government or good citizenship or of failure to observe any of the provisions of this act.

SECTION 7. Failure of Private Schools to Comply with Act.:—Consequences ..... In case any private denominational or parochial school after a final determination by proper authorities under this act fails, refuses or neglects to conform to and comply therewith, no person shall be granted or allowed a certificate to teach therein and the pupils attending such school or schools be required to attend the public school of the proper district as provided by law in like manner as though there was no such private, denominational or parochial school. Full credit for certification under the law shall be given all teachers who have taught in private, denominational or parochial schools the same as though they had taught in public schools.

Even as it was passed, some communities, unprepared to meet its requirements, had to withdraw from their educational work in the state. But Saint Catharine, with her accredited schools and certificated teachers was not disturbed, for herself, by the legislation, although she resented any attempt on the part of the state to infringe on the rights of denominational and private schools. At home, in Kentucky, the same steps are being taken to conform to and anticipate any progressive educational measure. At Saint Agnes Academy, Memphis, Tennessee, like alertness is manifested and preparatory training and courses for teachers in service are obtained from the professors of the Christian Brothers College.

The Catholic school now shares with the Church the honor of being the target for every kind of

malignant shaft. Nor is the reason far to seek. If the Church in America is a great and noble institution, it is due largely to the Catholic school, especially the parochial school. From its basement rooms, the parochial school has expanded into stately buildings, modern in every detail; and the simple curriculum has advanced, without parting with its religious training. To the grammar school, in the larger parishes, high schools have been added; above these, in ever increasing numbers, stand the Catholic colleges and universities. In tests with public and state institutions, the Catholic pupils not only hold their own, but are often the superior. This, of course, is as it should be, grounded as our Catholic educational system is, on Eternal Truth. And because this is so, the enemy, who "never sleepeth," seeks its downfall. Hence must the future of Catholic education witness a progress that will eclipse even its splendid past. On American soil we must behold the glory of Oxford of Pre-Reformation days, of Louvain, before German guns destroyed all but its immortal spirit. The fuel that will feed this flame—who will say it is not the parochial school—where is fostered the soul which shone forth in Catholic Europe, surpassing

"The glory that was Greece,  
The grandeur that was Rome."

It is not surprising that the bishops are so deeply interested in the parochial school, that pastors everywhere give it thought, only second to the ministrations of the altar, and that superiors of the

teaching orders are bending every effort to secure the highest educational advancement for their sisters.

The record of these one hundred years of devotion to Christian education exemplified by Saint Catharine's daughters is a glorious page of the history of American Catholicism. Ten thousand children are annually taught by them in their various schools and academies. Because of them, generation after generation of noble men and women have been formed for the Church and State. No pen adequately can write their story, no words, properly tell the **praise** due them. For what they did down the long years of this century, was not done for the human rewards of wealth or fame or man's approval, but for love of God and their neighbor. That love alone drew Marie Sansbury and companions from the refuge of their homes, caused them to break the tender ties of family affection, and enabled them to endure the hardships of their new life; that same love drew their successors, down to the latest postulant to knock at Saint Catharine's door. The world can not understand the mystery of it, but sensible of its good results, honors it and those whom it actuates. Well it should, for blot out from the records of time what this love, as exemplified by the religious orders, has accomplished, and how slight would be the advance of the race on the march of civilization! And had not Marie Sansbury and her companions responded to the voice of that love and become the founders of the conventual Third Order of Saint

Dominic in North America, who shall reckon the magnitude of the loss resulting! We acknowledge our debt to those heroic pioneer daughters of Saint Dominic in Kentucky, to their successors who carried on so gloriously what they, in the larger hope, began. If to-day we find them possessing splendid schools, recognized as leaders in their profession of teaching, true exemplars of the religious life, it is because they were faithful and true, for unto such has been promised God's blessing and help and protection.

We now reach the last page of the history of Saint Catharine of Sienna's first century of existence. The future augurs well for the continuance of the great work carried on successfully through these hundred years. Never perhaps did the world stand more in need than now of the spirit of Saint Dominic, fearless in the cause of truth, zealous for the things of God—a spirit that will fulfill all the promise of that future for the Sisters of Saint Catharine Congregation, as it has shone forth in the past, since it was born in the little log cabin on the Kentucky frontier.

THE END

### THE FISHER-MAIDS OF CHRIST

On the infinite stretch of Eternity's Sea  
 Rode the Fleet of God, one day,  
 'Neath sails as white as gull-wings spread,  
 Their rudders tossed the spray,  
 Till the tender touch of Twilight's hand  
 Caressed the gold-flecked sky,  
 When Christ, the Captain, signalled them  
 To seek the haven nigh.

He built a wondrous city there—  
 From storm-lashed cliffs apart,  
 And peopled it with virgins fair,  
 He drew from out His Heart;  
 Then, clothing them with lily-sheen  
 Of His own purity,  
 He bade each maiden launch her craft  
 Upon Sin's angry Sea.

Since that blest day, one hundred years  
 Have slept their dreamless sleep,  
 And still the silent stars look down  
 Upon the throbbing deep,  
 And shed their ever lucent beams  
 On tireless fisher-bands,  
 Who labor through the dreamy night  
 For Christ, in distant lands.

On yester-e'en, He bade them all  
 Make ready and set sail  
 Unto the harbor-lights of Home  
 Where winds of love prevail.  
 They sped, then, fleet as mists of night,  
 On blue waves crowned with snow,  
 Till Morning poured upon each barque  
 Her wine-cup's crimson glow.

Today, great ships at anchor lie  
 Full many hundreds strong—  
 Their decks, with whiteness radiant,  
 Christ's virgins ever throng;  
 And He, the Captain, seems to wait  
 For that blissful future day,  
 When His Fleet shall reach the Port of Peace  
 In His Kingdom—far away.

SISTER IMELDA, O. S. D.

## APPENDIX

### Prioresses of Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent

|                            |                                     |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Mother Angela Sansbury     | January 6, 1823 to January 6, 1829. |
| Mother Magdalen Edelen     | January 6, 1829 to January 6, 1832. |
| Mother Helen Whelan        | January 6, 1832 to January 6, 1835. |
| Mother Rose Tennelly       | January 6, 1835 to January 6, 1838. |
| Mother Helen Whelan        | January 6, 1838 to January 6, 1841. |
| Mother Rose Tennelly       | January 6, 1841 to January 6, 1844. |
| Mother Columba Walsh       | January 6, 1844 to January 6, 1847. |
| Mother Teresa Lynch        | January 6, 1847 to January 6, 1850. |
| Mother Angela Lynch        | January 6, 1850 to January 6, 1853. |
| Mother Helen Whelan        | January 6, 1853 to January 6, 1856. |
| Mother Helen Whelan        | January 6, 1856 to January 6, 1859. |
| Mother Josepha White       | January 6, 1859 Resigned June 1859. |
| Mother Magdalen Edelen     | June 6, 1859 to January 6, 1862.    |
| Mother Imelda Montgomery   | January 6, 1862 to January 6, 1865. |
| Mother Columba Walsh       | January 6, 1865 to January 6, 1868. |
| Mother Benven Rumpff       | January 6, 1868 to January 6, 1871. |
| Mother Regina O'Meara      | January 6, 1871 to August 4, 1873.  |
| Mother Regina O'Meara      | August 4, 1873 to August 4, 1876.   |
| Mother Angela Lynch        | August 4, 1876 to August 4, 1879.   |
| Mother Regina O'Meara      | August 4, 1879 to August 4, 1882.   |
| Mother Regina O'Meara      | August 4, 1882 to August 4, 1885.   |
| Mother Regina O'Meara      | August 4, 1885 to August 4, 1888.   |
| Mother Regina O'Meara      | August 4, 1888 to August 4, 1891.   |
| Mother Vincent F. Thompson | Aug. 4, 1891 to Aug. 4, 1894.       |
| Mother Vincent F. Thompson | July 25, 1894 to July 25, 1897.     |
| Mother Bernardine Bushue   | July 25, 1897 to July 25, 1900.     |
| Mother Agnes Hunt          | July 25, 1900 to July 25, 1903.     |
| Mother Agnes Hunt          | July 25, 1903 to July 25, 1906.     |
| Mother Magdalen Norton     | July 25, 1906 to July 25, 1909.     |
| Mother Aquin Holleran      | July 25, 1909 to July 25, 1912.     |
| Mother Aquin Holleran      | July 25, 1912 to July 25, 1915.     |
| Mother Francesca Kearney   | July 25, 1915 to July 25, 1918.     |
| Sister M. Joseph Clark     | July 25, 1918 to July 25, 1921.     |
| Sister Bernadette Clements | July 25, 1921                       |



## Foundations of the Dominican Sisters of Saint Catharine of Sienna.

- 1822—Mother-house, Washington County, Kentucky.  
1833—Saint Mary, Somerset, Ohio.  
1833—School for small boys, Sienna Vale, Washington County, Kentucky.  
1851—Saint Agnes Academy, Memphis, Tennessee.  
1864—La Salette Academy, Memphis, Tennessee.  
1866—Saint Louis Bertrand School, Louisville, Kentucky.  
1867—Holy Rosary Academy, Louisville, Kentucky.  
1869—Immaculate Conception Academy, Jackson, Tennessee.  
1870—Saint Peter School, Memphis, Tennessee.  
1873—Our Saviour School, Jacksonville, Illinois.  
1877—Saint Dominic School (Colored), Springfield, Kentucky.  
1880—Saint Agnes District School, Washington County, Kentucky.  
1881—Saint Rose District School, Washington County, Kentucky.  
1882—Saint Dominic School, Springfield, Kentucky.  
1882—Saint Joseph School, Mattoon, Illinois.  
1884—Saint Charles School, Marshal, Illinois.  
1885—Saint Mary School, Paris, Illinois.  
1886—Holy Trinity School, Fredericksburg, Kentucky.  
1886—Saint Bridget School, Louisville, Kentucky.  
1888—Saint Peter (Colored) School, Memphis, Tennessee.  
1888—Saint Patrick School, Watertown, Massachusetts.  
1889—Saint Michael School, Lowell, Massachusetts.  
1891—Saint Francis de Sales School, Charlestown, Massachusetts.  
1895—Sacred Heart School, Effingham, Illinois.  
1898—Infant of Prague School, Waverly, Massachusetts.  
1901—Our Lady of Lourdes Academy, Spalding, Nebraska.  
1904—Saint Rose of Lima School, Dennison, Iowa.  
1904—Saint Joseph School, East Saint Louis, Illinois.  
1906—Saint Patrick School, North Platte, Nebraska.  
1906—Saint Patrick School, West Lynn, Massachusetts.  
1907—Saint Stephen School, Exeter, Nebraska.  
1907—Saint John Berchmans School, Chicago, Illinois.  
1909—Immaculate Conception Academy, Hastings, Nebraska.  
1911—Sacred Heart Academy, Watertown, Massachusetts.  
1912—Saint Cecelia School, Hastings, Nebraska.  
1912—Sacred Heart School, East Boston, Massachusetts.  
1912—Saint Anthony School, Cedar Rapids, Nebraska.  
1913—Saint Mary School, Dawson, Nebraska.  
1913—Saint John School, North Cambridge, Massachusetts.

- 1914—Saint Patrick School, Fremont, Nebraska.
- 1915—Saint Mary School, Omaha, Nebraska.
- 1915—Saint James School, Kearney, Nebraska.
- 1916—Saint Patrick School, Havelock, Nebraska.
- 1916—Saint Patrick School, Missouri Valley, Iowa.
- 1917—Saint Dominic Boys' School, Waverly, Massachusetts.
- 1918—Saint Patrick School, McCook, Nebraska.
- 1918—Saint Brendan School, Elkins, West Virginia.
- 1919—Saint Mary School, Red Oak, Iowa.
- 1921—Saint Catharine of Sienna Hospital, McCook, Nebraska.
- 1921—Sacred Heart School, South Bend, Indiana.
- 1921—Saint Bartholomew School, Chicago, Illinois.

### Saint Catharine of Sienna Alumnae Association:

The Saint Catharine of Sienna Alumnae Association was organized on August 15, 1899, during Mother Bernardine's term of office as prioress of Saint Catharine of Sienna Convent. It was at the earnest solicitation of Sister M. Pius Fitzpatrick, O. S. D., a graduate of 1849, and for seventy years a professed religious in the Order of Saint Dominic, that the reunion of the former students was effected. The old pupils of every decade eagerly responded to the invitation, anxious to assist their loved Alma Mater in her great and noble work of Christian education.

The present officers are as follows:

President, Miss Phebe Harris.  
Vice-President, Mrs. J. C. Hood.  
Secretary, Miss Loretto Tighe.  
Treasurer, Mrs. J. P. Cassilly.

To assist the officers at the Centennial Celebration the following delegates were appointed:

Mrs. G. L. Haydon, Springfield, Kentucky.  
Mrs. John Boldrick, Lebanon, Kentucky.

Mrs. Ray Boone, Bardstown, Kentucky.  
Mrs. T. A. Medley, Owensboro, Kentucky.  
Mrs. P. J. Chinn, Harrodsburg, Kentucky.  
Misses Nell Morrissy and Mary Timony, Danville, Kentucky.  
Mrs. M. J. Ross, Fairfield, Kentucky.  
Mrs. Ekro Rapier, New Haven, Kentucky.  
Miss Martha McCrocklin Bloomfield, Kentucky.  
Mrs. W. H. Davis, Uniontown, Kentucky.  
Miss Hattie Thompson, Loretto, Kentucky.

## Reminiscence.

### Saint Catharine As I Remember It.

When but a little boy, as my mother was ill with consumption, my brother, Doctor Frank Polin and I were sent by my father to Saint Magdalen Academy, later rechristened, and known as Saint Catharine Academy. At that time as well as I can remember, there were at the academy Mother Helen Whelan, Sister Magdalen Edelen, Sister Rose Tennelly, Sister Mary Clements, Sister Valina Montgomery, Sister Martha McLane, Sister Teresa Caho, Sister Dominica Caho, Sister Joanna Simpson, Sister Emily Thorpe, Sister Columba Walsh and Sister Angela Lynch. All these sisters were in the academy during the three years that I was a pupil there. Sister Helen was Mother superior and Sister Mary was prefect and a terror to us boys. Some of the other boarders were William Jackson, Pat Dillon, John and Matthew Fitzpatrick, King Weathers, Clay Weathers, and Frank Polin. There were also a number of day pupils.

The boys' apartments were in the central part of the building and were later converted into the parlor, reception room and infirmary. The lowest part was used as a refectory and kitchen, the dormitory was up in the attic. The chapel was attached to this building. An old weather-boarded loghouse, the primitive building and first academy was located back in the sisters' arbor and flower garden.

Here I remained for about three years, petted and spoiled by the sisters, but very much at home. It is not necessary for me to follow the progress of the institution, we have seen it grow from its infantile beginning until now it has become one of the noted academies of the State. It has its pupils from all parts of the

country; it has sent its graduates out into the world, girls who have made their mark in society, in the home, and in the hearts of their friends. Children and grandchildren of these former pupils have come here to be educated, proving the love and gratitude with which the care and interest of the sisters has been remembered and cherished by these first pupils of their Alma Mater.

As for me I must ever love the old place. Many fond memories cluster around it which have always created a homey feeling in my heart for it. Even if the older sisters have departed, still there are some among its members for whom I shall ever cherish a grateful affection. And as for those who watched and nursed my little Nellie as the spark of life left her body, I must ever hold them dear in memory.

D. O. POLIN.

### SCHOOL DAYS

To travel back in memory sixty years, and to recall vividly with any degree of accuracy the incidents, the customs, the happenings of those early days at old Saint Catharine, involves a feat which would ordinarily seem impossible. Yet, we know mental impressions of early life are always lasting and their effect upon our memories are both truthful and irremovable.

When we gather and discuss the days of long ago, we scarcely refer to the drudgery of the classroom or study hall, but rather do our thoughts revert to subjects which can be discussed with more pleasant recollections, as our instructors, our friends, our amusements, and the humorous tricks practiced on each other in those happy school girl days.

After all these years, when we meet we invariably end our conversations with solemn words of praise, of love, of reverence and of gratitude for the departed instructors who so diligently guided our foot steps, so carefully directed all our efforts, so jealously guarded our morals, and so zealously and earnestly prepared both our minds and our bodies for the struggle which confronted us as we passed from the life of school to the school of life.

I recall sweet and pleasant memories of the stately and cultured Sister Vallina Montgomery, the accomplished and kind-tempered Sister Imelda Montgomery, the sedate and strict Sister Francis Conlan, the happy, light-hearted Sister Louise Haydon. They have all passed to their eternal reward carrying with them our prayers and supplications for everlasting life and happiness. One more of my instructors stands out in my memory and deserves a word from me; the one upon whom, as Prefect of Studies

and Discipline, rested the burden and serious problem of controlling the conduct of the students, one who always upheld and maintained a constant criterion of right, an inflexible standard of justice, the one whom—when we were troubled—we never feared to approach, for she was always kind and just—one for whom we still retain grateful memories—Sister Angela Lynch.

I came to Saint Catharine when I was about eight years of age, I think it was in the summer of 1848. I remained until I was graduated in 1859. Prominent among the students at this time were Rose Warren, who married Judge Kelly of Saint Paul, Minnesota. Mrs. Kelly is still living and is a loyal member of Saint Catharine Alumnae. Others were Eliza and Mary Hagan, Teresa Kenney, Mary Boldrick, Lizzie Thurman and Kate Thurman, who married Judge Bob Harding, and Mary Hooper. My special friend was Mary Kelly, but we called her "Cot." She was the sister of Rev. J. A. Kelly, O. P., and was later married to Mr. William Connor. Another devoted friend of mine was Ellen Lincoln, the cousin of President Lincoln, and a sister of Mrs. Levi Smith.

Mr. DeGranval taught us dancing, and colored Dominic played the fiddle for us. Mr. DeBoyer was the instructor in French. The memory of those days is sweet to me yet, and I am living in the hope of assisting at the centennial celebration in 1922.

Mrs. Mary Lizzie Grimes Bevelle.

## SIENNA VALE

(By Eugene Cocke)

O hallowed spot, O sacred spot,  
O vale that I adore!  
With memory's eye I see you now  
As in bright years of yore.

And oh, the happiness it brings,  
As oft I sit and dream,  
And think, e'en now I'm roaming free  
Upon thy wooded green.

I seem to know each tiny flower  
That peeps among thy meadows;  
The birds that sing amidst thy bowers  
I like to call my fellows.

I think I hear the mocking bird,  
The red bird and the thrush;  
I think I see each tiny nest  
That's hid in every bush.

As long as Memory's eye is bright,  
These visions ne'er will fail  
Nor time nor distance ever blight  
Sienna's cherished vale.

(Eugene Cocke spent several years of  
his youth at Saint Catharine.)

### A Memory

Peering back through the long corridors of time, the memory of Saint Catharine of Sienna in the early days is, indeed, a pleasant retrospection. Those days are well worthy of praise and commemoration in the annals of Saint Catharine of Sienna. It is sweet to recall the picture of my early home as it was in the fifties and when I visited it in nineteen hundred and three. Then, as of old, the school life of the sisters and pupils centered around the Hidden Life in the tabernacle, just as the wonders of nature, the rolling plains, the distant hills surround Saint Catharine of Sienna on every side.

For a hundred years, from these beauties has gone up the "Te Deum" of nature unto nature's God, and with these memories conquering time and space, I hear again the soft notes of Mary's bells calling all to prayer at morning, noon and evening. The vista, counted by years, seems very, very, long, but the sweet memories it awakens are as of yesterday; memories of the gentle, kind sisters, our mentors, whom all so loved, yet sometimes feared when a wholesome, yet kind reproof came after a rule had been broken or twisted—memories of the dear girls, classmates, upon whom we often played tricks, and of the juniors from whom we exacted despotic obedience! But where are those teachers and schoolmates, from whom, when the time came, we parted with so much real grief, and with such tears? Where are they now? Some have answered the final summons, and from pure, stainless lives have entered a blessed immortality. And the rest? They have scattered far and wide, to meet life's duties, cares and labors, with the sorrows and joys it brings to all. Wherever each may be, sister

or schoolmate, if these words of Rose Warren shall reach her, let them speak from my heart to her heart.

God bless them, one and all.

Rose Warren Kelley.

### THE DOMINICANS IN MEMPHIS.

The part played by the Dominicans during the fearful yellow fever times is one of the brightest chapters in the story of their service in Memphis. - - - But it is not alone to the Fathers of the Order of Saint Dominic that glory is due in this recital of Dominican heroism in Memphis. The Sisters of the Order with a courage and energy that could come only from above, carried on a gigantic work during the epidemics. The part they played in those days is one of Christian charity that can never be fully appreciated this side of Paradise. Approximately thirty of them laid down their lives. All were ladies of gentle rearing, yet they slaved day and night under the harrowing conditions that attend such labors, with a holy patience and a gentle spirit, until, their vitality wasted away, they lay down their burden at the feet of the Master whom they had served so well. The names of most of them are not even known to-day. Their deathless deeds are not commemorated in bronze or marble tablets, but it can be truly said their memory is sacred and safe in the inmost shrine of every Memphis heart.\*

Another account from a non-Catholic source epitomizes the place the nuns held in the hearts of the grateful people: "So did the Sisters of the Church, the nuns, as one, fall in the sacred work for which they were quick to volunteer. - - - Serenely as to some feast they went, bearing with them always the aroma of lives made precious by self denial, and flooding the sick chamber with the glory of hearts wholly given to God. - - - Theirs days and nights were devoted to the sick and the dying. - - - Tired nature broke under the strain. They went down before the Reaper like ripened grain.

### THE DOMINICAN DEATH ROLL IN MEMPHIS.†

DIED—At La Salette Academy, on the 7th inst., Rev. B. V. Carey, O. P.; on the 8th, Sister Mary Joseph McKernan, O. S. D.,

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\*Memoir of Saint Peters Church—Father McManus, O. P.

†New York Freeman's Journal, October 28, 1873.

formerly Prioress of Saint Agnes' Community; on the 9th, Rev. D. A. O'Brien, O. P.; on the 13th, Sister Martha Quarry, O. S. D., all in consequence of their arduous labors in behalf of their fellow beings suffering from the dreadful pestilence desolating Memphis. In death, as in life, they were united; serving to their utmost the God for whom they had left all on earth that they might win the bright crown reserved for faithful souls in heaven. Rev. Father O'Brien was for several years past, Chaplain to Saint Agnes' Community. Temporally, as well as spiritually, he was their sincere friend and adviser, and to his venerated memory in an especial manner are the following lines—a tribute of regard—gratefully dedicated:

Priests of God, most noble champions,  
Martyrs in a holy cause,  
Friends, advisers of the dying;  
Just dispensers of God's laws!  
In this dread contagion risking  
That which mortals hold most dear—  
Life, and all its loved affections,  
Bravely disregarding fear.

Dear, dear Sisters. Brides of Jesus,  
Virgins in the Virgin's train,  
In the bright abode of Heaven,  
You will chant the Virgin's strain!  
Long you labored for God's glory,  
Now you've passed to sweet repose,  
Which your Spouse, divine, eternal,  
Lord and King of Heaven bestows.

All have fallen—all have conquered,  
All have now undying fame;  
'Mid the blest cohorts of Heaven  
Charity enshrines their name.  
Rest, beloved ones, in God's bosom,  
In His heart of mercy rest;  
May His mercy—yea, His judgment,  
And His Name be ever blessed!



Now in anger He is chastening,  
 But how few there were as they;  
 Fathers—Sisters, passed to Heaven,  
 Plead our cause—this scourge to stay!—  
 We have sinned, alas, how deeply!  
 Lacerating with sin's dart,  
 By our crimes unnumbered—deadly,  
 Jesus' bleeding Sacred Heart.

God of Judgment! God of justice!  
 Thou art God of Mercy, too,  
 Let thy dear Son's crimsoned Passion  
 Wash our deep-dyed stains from view.  
 Spare Thy Priests! O spare Thy Spouses!  
 Spare Thy innocents, O God!  
 Let sweet mercy temper justice—  
 Stay Thy stern avenging rod.

Mary, agonizing Mother,  
 Raise thy suppliant hands on high!  
 Mary, "Help of sinners," hasten,  
 Hasten ere our loved ones die!  
 God of Heaven, stay Thine anger,  
 Hear a contrite sinner's prayer,  
 "Dies irae, dies illa,  
 Spare, O God, Thy people spare!"

Sister Josephine Beck, O. S. D.

Convent of Saint Agnes,  
 Memphis, Tenn., October 15, 1873.

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John D. Kelly, Esq.,\* New York.

Dear Friend:

The ravages of the scourge, I may say, have been far more destructive among our Irish fellow-citizens than any others. Their sufferings can not be given in ink, nor in oil. Entire families swept away—which would seem merciful, as no orphans were left

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\*New York Freeman's Journal, November 8, 1873.

behind to face a world which is too often pitiless to the parentless. Need I say their sufferings have reached you? You and your co-laborers confess your cognizance by substantial and most timely response. Hundreds of children are thrown on the Church which has been, and will be, a parent to them. But worldly means are essential. Our priests have fallen with heroism, which ever brightens the Christian's death. Our noble sisters have not slept nor eaten when others needed food or nursing. These—God's jewels on earth—not only gave their time, their skill, their lives, but every comfortable convenience they possessed and could collect. They are destitute in their own condition. Your own mind can conceive how much it has been increased by having the care of these poor, helpless children, many of whom lived scantily at best; but they had father and mother, who would teach them life. But now—no caress, no maternal tenderness, save that given them by these tireless, devoted, angelic sisters. The clergy, the sisters, are so absorbed in the care of their fellow beings that I think they themselves are ignorant of their own destitution. Their friends must appeal for them. - - - Our Catholic community has been stricken with a heavy hand, and our friends abroad must help us—relieve the hunger of the living little ones, clothe their shivering limbs, and by our contributions aid these good sisters not only to preserve their lives, but save their souls. - - - To see these sisters assume such heavy responsibilities, at such a time, with nothing but their unbounded trust in God, seems too brave for mortality. I can only say, dear friend, that they are in need. The misery which they are assuaging is greater than I ever witnessed; an army quartered in an inimical village could not make sorrow or distress so touching. Our good sisters need everything, and you and yours have their blessings—which I consider the greatest of boons.

Your true friend,  
BARNEY HUGHES.

### THE FIRE.

Editorial from "The Record," January 7, 1904.

The destruction of Saint Catharine is a diocesan calamity; as such it is regarded by the clergy and laity. Its gravity has not been equalled in the history of our Diocese. Within a few hours, in the dead of an intensely cold January night, and amid the Christmas festivities, the material labours and accumulation

of eighty-one years were blotted out. The Institution of Saint Catharine was one of the four surviving ancient glories of the Church of Kentucky. It, together with Loretto, Nazareth and Saint Mary, was coeval with its first beginnings. It was the cradle of the Daughters of Saint Dominic in this country; it grew up with the Church in the United States. Established in the year 1822 and incorporated in 1851, it became a home of culture and refinement, of piety and learning, of art and science. It ever lent a charm to Kentucky, ennobled its people, blessed their generations, and honoured the Church. For these reasons, the loss of Saint Catharine is our greatest calamity which we feel keenly. The heart of every priest and lay person in the Diocese goes forth helpfully and sympathetically to the noble Sisters of Saint Dominic in their hour of misfortune and trial. God will provide for them.

### SACRIFICED.

To the Sisters of Saint Catharine

One summer morning bright,  
We launched a beautiful bark  
To spread Faith's brilliant light  
O'er regions cold and dark.

It bounded on the ocean wide,  
Waving the golden banner of Truth,  
And feared naught from the tide,  
Innocent in its guileless youth.

At the helm, we willingly stood,  
Through surging waters to plod,  
Thinking only of other's good,  
Happy in the love of our Pilot—God.

On and on, it smoothly sailed,  
Dancing o'er waves merrily,  
Strongest forts it quietly scaled,  
Joyous, buoyant and free.

But a sudden adverse gale  
Arose in wildest fierceness,  
And our pretty boat, so frail,  
Went down in the awful stress.

It was purchased at great cost,  
And so dear to us—our idolized,  
Yet, alas! it's sunk, and all's lost,  
Wrecked, ruined—we're sacrificed.

“My God! Why hast Thou forsaken me so?”  
Heart-sick, weary, tempest tossed,  
Behold all, everything gone—but no,  
Faith is left—take now the holocaust

KATHLEEN DON LEAVY.

From “The Record,” January 7, 1904.

One of the Alumnae of Saint Catharine, in speaking of the calamity, said:—

“Words can not describe the sorrow and distress which must wring the hearts of all who were endeared to Saint Catharine. For myself, the disaster has plunged me into grief. The days spent at Saint Catharine are as a hallowed memory to me, and it seems now that a light has gone out of my life. To my little girls I would often speak in tender words of those halcyon days when life seemed one long holiday at Sienna Vale. The dear faces of sisters, some of whom now dead and gone, were ever before my eyes; their soft, kindly voices, ever ringing in my ears; their counsel and admonitions ever in my heart. In my dreams the sweet and happy associations of my school girl days at the convent came as a beautiful recollection to haunt the chambers of memory, and for years I never retired to rest unless they recurred to my dormant faculties. Now those scenes have gone forever more. But the children of Saint Catharine will never forget the surroundings of a once beautiful convent home. Though the visible marks of its stately edifices have been blotted out, they shall live forever in our hearts. The little chapel, where we prayed and learned to love our God, within whose walls the sacrifice of Calvary's Mount was daily offered up; wherein the chosen virgins registered vows of which, perhaps, no earthly record now remains, but are recorded where they will never die; the Convent in which were the sister's simple room, the cleanly dormitory, the novices' room; the parlor, the library where were gathered with love and care, relics and treasures from all parts of the world—all are cherished memories. There, too, sleep the eternal sleep of death in its quiet little cemetery the dear nuns that our early

girlhood days once knew; lonelier now than ever are its sacred precincts, but the spirits of those departed ones will hover over the place and beg of God that it may still be the home of another Convent and Academy that will make the world nobler for its birth.

"The friends of Saint Catharine will not forget the sisters in their trial. In many a home a mother is repeating the wise counsel to her children which she herself learned from the gentle teachers of Saint Dominic. In many a home a loving, obedient daughter, is brightening the lives of parents because of the years spent in the Academy. Let us unite in a fervent prayer that God will repay them a hundred fold even in this life for what we now call their loss."

XX.

From "The Record," January 7, 1904.

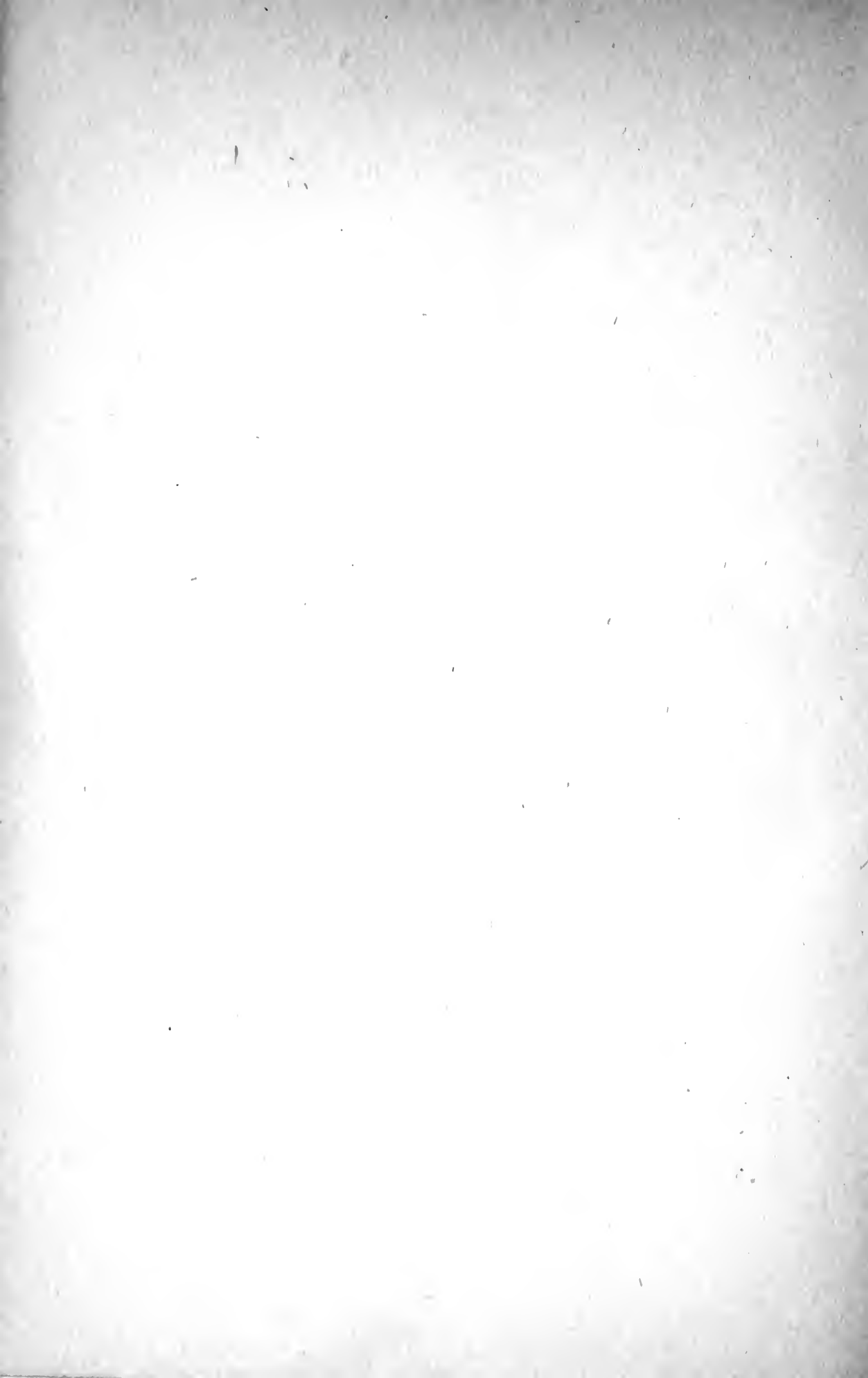
#### SAINT CATHARINE.

North, South and East and West deplore  
That "Alma Mater" stands no more.  
What loss! such monuments of worth,  
Of treasures, rarest here on earth.

Ah! after scores of happy years  
Pathetic eyes are filled with tears,  
To look upon that home so dire  
In ruins from unsparing fire.

Thank God, no loved ones are gone;  
The noble and good work lives on.  
Oh, may they not appeal in vain  
To build Saint Catharine up again.

By W. G.











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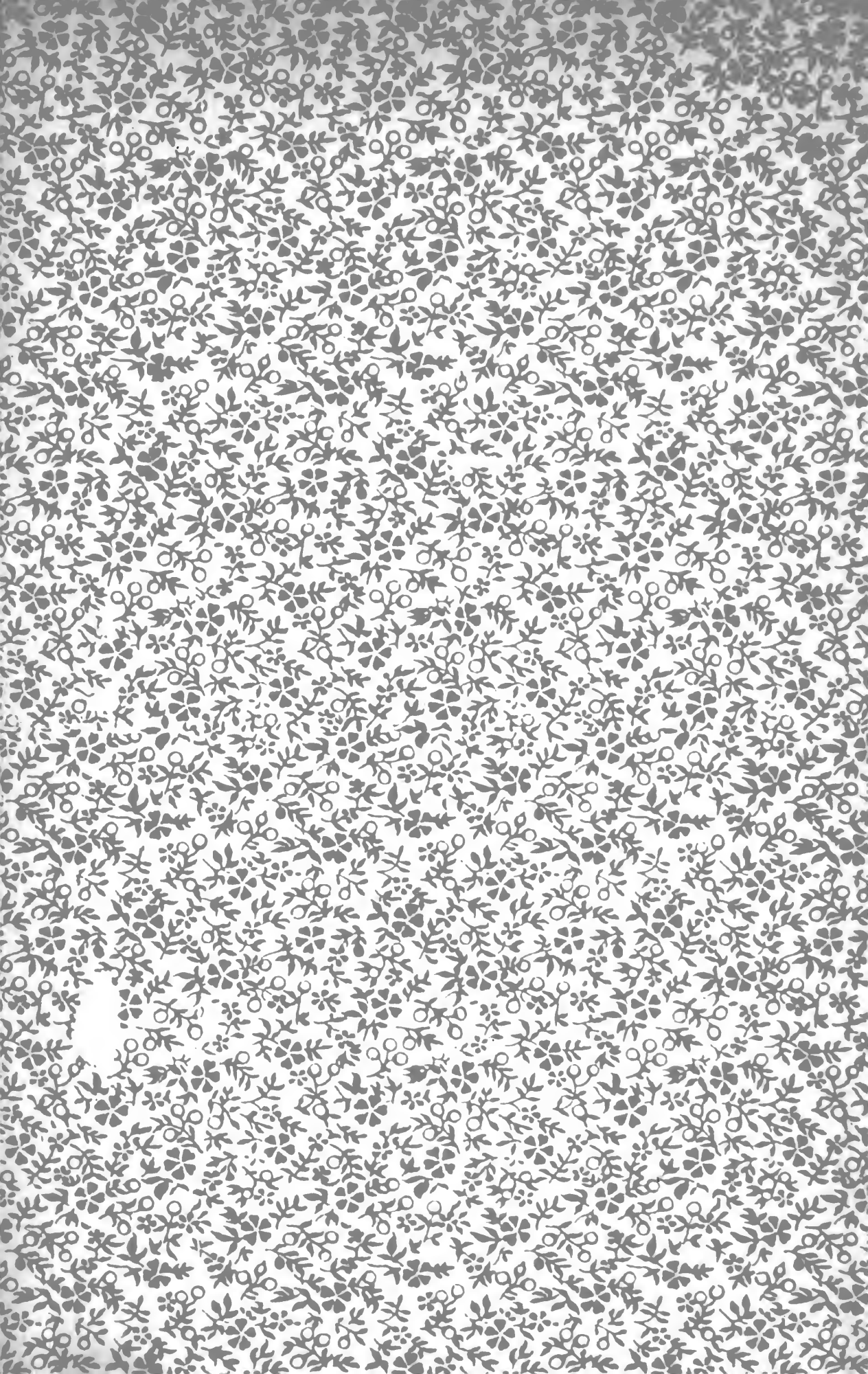


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